



# COMMUNITY Connections

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FALL

## You're Invited

### SEPTEMBER

#### ▶ Seattle University Youth Initiative Exhibition

VACHON & KINSEY GALLERIES

Sept. 21–Dec. 16 (open 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mon. through Fri., except holidays).

Reception: Oct. 20, 5–8 p.m.

An exhibition of three related Seattle University projects: the process and development of a mural created for Bailey Gatzert Elementary School with help from students, families and teachers; photography and text on cultural heritage and citizenship, created by first-generation Somali youth in the neighborhood; and images documenting a year (2010–11) of activities at Neighborhood House Head Start at Yesler Terrace. A short film highlighting after-school reading circles at Bailey Gatzert also will be shown.

### OCTOBER

#### ▶ All Things Equal

HEDREEN GALLERY

Oct. 5–Nov. 19 (open 1:30–6 p.m. Wed. through Sat., except holidays)

Reception: Oct 5, 5–8 p.m.

Local thinkers discuss exhibit themes: Oct. 12, 6–8 p.m. Presenters connect exhibit's spiritual and artistic elements: Nov. 6, 12:30–2 p.m.

Artists with varied cultural and language backgrounds look at political terms that shaped world history in the last century. They turn to their native language dictionaries for definitions of socialism, capitalism and terrorism.

#### ▶ Block Party and Soccer Game

CHERRY STREET AND 13TH AVENUE

Oct. 16, starting at 11 a.m.

Neighbors are welcome to join a family-friendly, non-alcohol block party followed by an SU men's soccer game against Sacramento State at Championship Field at 1 p.m. The party will include free carnival games, music and affordable food and drink. Game tickets: \$7 adults; \$5 children.

### NOVEMBER

#### ▶ The Importance of Being Earnest

LEE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Nov. 10–12, 16–19; 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 13 and 20, 2 p.m.

Preview: Nov. 9, 7:30 p.m.

Farce and witty dialogue have helped make this Oscar Wilde's most popular play. Tickets: \$6 students; \$8 faculty; \$10 general public; box office: (206) 296-2244.

To learn more about public events at SU, visit [www.seattleu.edu/events](http://www.seattleu.edu/events). You can view or print a campus map at [www.seattleu.edu/maps/](http://www.seattleu.edu/maps/) or call the Campus Assistance Center at (206) 296-6464 for directions.

## SU and Partners to 'Serve Seattle'

On Sept. 24, 500 Seattle University volunteers and community partners will once again join forces to improve community green spaces by removing blackberries and other invasive plants.

Serve Seattle will focus on Beacon Hill's Cheasty Green-space in partnership with EarthCorps and at Yesler Terrace in partnership with Parents Empowerment for Education Results.

"We're really grateful to SU for being such an important link in this chain of community service," says Elizabeth White of EarthCorps.

SU's Kelly Benkert, coordinator for Serve Seattle, says the university sponsors environmental projects to connect the campus to the community and help create a culture of service among students to deepen their learning. "This day of service is a great way to introduce students to the university's ethic of service and it has a real impact on the community," says Benkert, who works in the Center for Service and Community Engagement.

In past years, SU has partnered with neighborhood organizations such as the Squire Park Community Council and Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce for numerous green space and neighborhood cleanups. One year, Serve Seattle focused on 12th Avenue South at Dr. Jose Rizal Park.

Serving the community is central to the university's Jesuit Catholic mission. SU was named one of the top



During Serve Seattle, students, faculty and staff from Seattle University participate in community cleanups.

20 universities in the nation for "Town-Gown Relations" (how well students interact with the community) in the Princeton Review's *The Best 373 Colleges* 2011 edition. Three out of four SU students—a rate more than twice the national average—now serve the community as part of their university experience.



## Woonerf\* on its Way

An innovative approach to a new neighborhood gathering space is expected to be completed in late spring or early summer 2012.

Located next to the Douglas, a mixed-use building that will provide housing for Seattle University students and retail space, the James Court Park and Woonerf (between 12th and 13th avenues, south of Cherry Street) will be a blend of public right of way and park. The green space is made possible through a collaborative effort among numerous stakeholders, including SU, the Seneca Group (developers of the Douglas), 12th Avenue Stewardship Committee, Squire Park Community Council and Seattle Parks and Recreation.

\*Woonerf is a Dutch term for a place where pedestrians and cyclists rule over automobiles, although all are part of the action.

James Court Park and Woonerf will provide new green space as this preliminary design illustrates.



### CHECK OUT BAILEY GATZERT'S OUTDOOR MURAL

SU students in the Community Art and Mural Painting Techniques class recently created a mural for Bailey Gatzert Elementary School. The public art project came together with much involvement and input from Bailey Gatzert students, their families and teachers. How the mural came to life will be featured in an upcoming public exhibition of Seattle University Youth Initiative projects. See "You're Invited" on the back page for details.

## Asha Mohamed

Education specialist for Seattle Housing Authority at Yesler Terrace

Banter and sass. That's the approach Asha Mohamed takes to get things done. As an educational specialist for the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) at Yesler Terrace, Mohamed works closely with the Seattle University Youth Initiative and other community partners to help children succeed in school.

Here's what she says about her work with the community and SU.

► When you joined SHA four years ago, you started to engage low-income refugee and immigrant families in discussions about their strengths. What did you discover?

► When we asked Yesler Terrace residents what they did best, they said "clean and babysit." There were only three child-care providers at the time. There are 30 now. And one of our residents launched a janitorial company. Now they not only make a livable wage but also are contributing members of society.

► Why did you make a conscious decision to meet with people rather than survey them?

► Door knocking is the only way. With surveys, the children have to serve as interpreters so parents can't really voice their concerns. We wanted to know what it would take for a Yesler Terrace child to be successful academically.

► What did you learn?

► Yesler Terrace parents not only don't know their parental rights, they don't know what higher education looks like. They don't know who their allies are in their child's education. Now we meet every Tuesday at 6 p.m., usually about 30 parents with their families.

► Is it true Seattle University President Stephen Sundborg, S.J., came to one of your meetings?

► Yes, Father Steve came and asked a question: "What do you know about Seattle University's Youth Initiative?" One of the elders answered him with this question: "What do you know about Yesler Terrace?" It was such a great learning moment for us all. Father Steve listened, took it all in, processed it and he came back a second time, too.

► How do you partner with Seattle University and community groups to cultivate that unity?

► SU took a leadership role in a volunteer effort to renovate Neighborhood House-Yesler Terrace Head Start recently and it catapulted from there. We all have a small piece as we work toward the same goal. It's all about doing and we're doing it.

Asha means hope in Hindu and love in Somali, which says a lot about what Asha Mohamed brings to her role at Yesler Terrace.

## Sharing Can Be a Blessing



Ezra Teshome, a Capitol Hill insurance agent and SU alumnus, enjoys the neighborhood near his office.

His business card carries the motto "Service above Self," which says a lot about Ezra Teshome's life philosophy. This State Farm insurance agent and Seattle University alumnus—class of 1976—finds ways to give 25 cents of every dollar he earns to global and local communities.

"That sharing feels like a blessing," says Teshome, a native of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where he attended Nativity Boys School run by Jesuits.

In his sunny State Farm office at the corner of 13th and East Pine, Teshome is surrounded by photos, awards and memorabilia from his efforts to support the Ethiopian community here and abroad. He's especially known for his work in Ethiopia to eradicate polio, develop low-income housing, construct a library, create a computer center and provide clean water to several villages in Ethiopia and Uganda.

Teshome and his wife Yobi, a 1983 graduate of the College of Nursing, became U.S. citizens and chose Seattle as home. Soon he

was president of the University District Rotary Club and convinced Rotarians to help him start Rotary Village in Addis Ababa to house Ethiopian refugees. Teshome led Rotarians in an ambitious program to eradicate polio in rural Ethiopia. They made a door-to-door campaign to encourage vaccination.

**"If you're sincere, if people see you're out there to help others, they'll trust that and help you."**

Ezra Teshome, '76

No new cases of polio have been recorded in Ethiopia for more than three years.

There's a big earthenware jug under Teshome's front office window, a reminder of the impact he had when water and sanitation facilities were added to more than 40 villages in rural Ethiopia. Rotarians and World Vision were involved in the effort.

"The results make me want to do more," says Teshome. "So many children might have died or suffered from water-borne illness had we not filtered clean water into reservoir tanks."

Here in Seattle, he mentors SU students at the Albers School of Business and Economics. He also chaired a foundation that raised funds to build St. Gebriel's, Seattle's first orthodox Ethiopian church, which celebrated its 10th anniversary this year.

Teshome won the 2010 World Citizen Award from the World Affairs Council and was named a Global Health Hero by *TIME Magazine*. Front and center on his office desk, however, is the Community Service Award he received from the univer-

sity at the 2011 Alumni Awards celebration.

Teshome reflects on his 30-plus years with State Farm as well as his SU education.

"It's the integrity of State Farm, the fact that we pay what we owe and make sure the customer's interests are covered ahead of our own. Fulfilling those promises are the most satisfying for me," he says. "If you're sincere, if people see you're out there to help others, they'll trust that and help you. That's something SU taught me and I continue to give back and count my blessings."



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### COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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Photos by Chris Joseph Taylor, university photographer. Mural photo by Jenn Ireland. Wooner preliminary design from Seattle Parks and Recreation.