# **SEATTLEU**



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2019





Dear Friends of the Center for Community Engagement,

This report celebrates the work of hundreds of university students, faculty, staff, community partners and local Seattle residents. Through our place-based strategy and our deep partnerships connecting campus and community, we are addressing the seemingly intractable issues we face as a city, a nation and a planet.

Yet, even as we celebrate our successes, we still have so much more to do. Perhaps somewhat ironically, more to do does not necessarily mean doing more. Despite a myriad of activities, we continue to fall short of our goals to house our neighbors, educate our city's children, feed our community members and eradicate the scourge of racism.

One reason we are failing is our lack of coordinated and strategic approaches to collectively address our social and environmental challenges. Often our disparate organizational agendas, individual egos and incoherent funding systems lead us to work for social change in small, isolated ways. At the Center for Community Engagement we've become more aware that cultivating deeper, more collaborative and more strategic networks of campus and community partners can increase our likelihood for success. This year, the Center will use its role as a convener and connector to deepen and expand partnerships that break down the artificial barriers that hinder us from working more cohesively.

This fall, we have begun planning for Seattle's first Local Improvement Network, uniting four local Seattle elementary schools and their communities to improve educational outcomes for students. This is just one of several efforts we are pursuing to create interconnecting webs of caring, smart and courageous individuals and organizations. (Check out the future directions section on page 12 of this report to learn more.)

Thank you for your partnership and support,

Kent Koth

Executive Director, Center for Community Engagement Seattle University

#### THE COLLABORATIVE WINDOW

# Celebrating Lasting Choice Neighborhoods Educational Partnership

By: Erin Naomi Burrows

In a rapidly transforming neighborhood, relationships serve as the center of effective collaboration.

In January 2019, the Center for Community Engagement hosted an event to celebrate the accomplishments of the Choice Neighborhoods Education Collaborative. a seven-year, grant-funded collective impact effort. In 2011, Seattle was one of five cities selected by U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to receive \$30 million for the Yesler Terrace housing redevelopment and comprehensive neighborhood revitalization through HUDS's Choice Neighborhoods program. Initiated in 2012, the program has led an effort to ensure low-income children in the Yesler neighborhood have access to early learning programs, tutoring, summer academic enrichment programs, college preparation mentoring and scholarships. At the celebration, the collaborative recognized recent high school graduates from the Yesler Terrace community by presenting them with new computers, courtesy of the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA).

According to You Cannot Pick Up Spilled Water, a report on the Choice Neighborhood Education Collaborative by Maureen Emerson Feit, PhD and Aimie Kawai, MNPL, "The Choice Neighborhood Educational Collaborative formed when leaders from SHA and CCE seized a window of opportunity that opened for both organizations in 2011. Studies of interorganizational collaboration characterize this 'collaborative window' as the confluence of four relatively independent streams: the problem stream, policy stream, social/political/economic stream and organizational stream. For SHA and CCE, all four streams converged. There was widespread recognition of a problem; technical expertise needed to develop a solution, the political will to enact solutions, the social, political and economic context favorable to address the problem and two lead organizations that were open and willing to incorporate external factors and partners in their decision-making."

Motivated by the belief that success in education is the best pathway out of poverty for low-income children and youth, the collaborative has worked to improve the academic achievement of students living at Yesler and in the adjacent neighborhood. Rachael Steward, former deputy director for the CCE and now community services administrator for Seattle Housing Authority, says "The partnership between Seattle University and Seattle Housing Authority nourished robust service delivery and community empowerment for residents living at Yesler Terrace. Led by the values articulated by the Yesler Citizens Review Council, the partnership built on the existing strengths and assets of the Yesler community. Partnerships were not limited to organizations. Parents have developed ever-increasing leadership skills and roles. Parent ambassadors organize neighbors around education opportunities at every schooling level."

While the Choice Neighborhood grant ends this fall, SHA, Seattle University and other educational partners have renewed their commitment to continue to collaborate to serve youth and families in the Yesler community.

"The partnership between Seattle
University and Seattle Housing Authority
nourished robust service delivery and
community empowerment for residents
living at Yesler Terrace."

#### Rachael Steward

Community Services Administrator Seattle Housing Authority



#### **DESIGNING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

# Service-Learning with Community Clients in SU Design Courses By: Debra Black

A successful design career requires more than artistic talent. Professor Naomi Kasumi, MFA, an acclaimed visual artist with installations worldwide, is adamant that designers must also master the art of client services. To give students the opportunity to learn how to balance competing

Naomi Kasumi, MFA demands, Kasumi added a servicelearning component to her Digital

Design I course in 2004. Later she designed a service-learning component for her Digital Design II course in which students divide into small groups, each creating a full realm of promotional campaign pieces for a different community partner.

Fast-forward to today and service-learning remains embedded in Kasumi's design curricula. It has proven its value to her students and community partners and enabled her to continue to grow as an educator. "The design process begins with communication," Kasumi explains. "The designer must derive the information needed to drive their creative process by asking the right questions and actively listening to their client's responses. Service-learning enables students to practice these skills in a space where it's OK to make a mistake, because that's how we learn."

The students' completed work reveals how well they listened to the client. "I want my students to detach from me, so that earning an A comes from work they do for someone whose style they don't know and who may not be able to answer their every question," she says. "My role is to guide them through the process."

Digital Design students work independently on a poster design after meeting with the client to learn their needs and ask questions. Class time is used for discussion and constructive criticism throughout the design process. Final poster designs are exhibited in the classroom and the client returns to view the work and hear students explain the thought behind their design. The client then selects the winning poster.

Word of her success with service-learning spread through faculty circles. Kent Koth, executive director at the Center for Community Engagement (CCE), encouraged Kasumi to apply for the center's Academic Service-Learning Faculty Fellows program. She participated in the year-long program in 2008-2009 and last year participated in the CCE's Community Engaged Justice Fellows program to deepen her practice in critical service-learning.

"The idea of incorporating service-learning into my classes had been a natural inclination," Kasumi says. "The fellows program helped me to articulate the how and why of what I was doing, which is something I need to do as an academic, and to systemize project planning and implementation. It was a huge learning experience."

Over the years, her digital design students have worked with dozens of community partner organizations, most of which Kasumi was introduced to through the CCE. The positive impact of her service-learning projects is evidenced by the feedback she receives from community partners, many of whom ask to continue working with her students.

"Service-learning provides these organizations access to good, affordable design work and empowers students to build their portfolios while honing skills that will help them in their professional career," she says. "It's a true win-win opportunity."



# Gentrification and Community Service Inspire Shinnyo Fellow's Pathway to Peace By: Debra Black



Shinnyo Fellow Jess Juanich, '20, is a double-major in Political Science and Public Affairs and Seattle U's Student Government President. Juanich found his pathway to peace volunteering as a legal assistant at the King County Bar Association Housing Justice Project, which offers pro-bono legal services to low-income tenants facing eviction. Growing up in Seattle's Central District, he witnessed the displacement of many friends and neighbors as gentrification spiked rents in one of Seattle's most culturally enriched neighborhoods.

"When I was younger my mom would cook Lumpia, Filipino-style egg rolls, and we would go outside and share them with our neighbors, most of whom were African-American and East African and we'd have conversation over food," Juanich says "But family homes on my street have been replaced by multistory apartment developments and many people have been priced out of the neighborhood."

The Shinnyo Fellowship for Community Leadership, offered through the Center for Community Engagement in partnership with the Shinnyo-en Foundation, is a philanthropic arm of the Shinnyo-en Buddhist Order and inspires students to implement peace building through direct service and community leadership. The foundation's "Infinite Paths to Peace" initiative invites fellows to reflect deeply on their life experiences to achieve peace. Stirred by his firsthand observations of income inequality and an interest in law, Juanich chose to focus his community service on a housing advocacy group.

"My job at the Housing Justice Project was to meet with several clients each day and brief the attorneys on each client's situation," he explains. "A lot of the intakes I did were very emotional and personal and I wanted

these people to feel they were genuinely heard. Active listening and being present in conversation with our clients manifested as my pathway to peace."

For his leadership project, Juanich worked with Campus Ministry to develop "Urban Plunge," a three-day event intended for Seattle U's first-year student population. Designed to immerse students in the Central District, Yesler Terrace and International District neighborhoods surrounding campus, Juanich shared with them the rich cultural history of these areas, led walking tours to show the impact of gentrification and explained the resulting displacement. There was also time for reflection and conversations with community leaders.

Juanich's experiences as a Shinnyo Fellow will inform his role as the incoming Student Government President.

"We've identified through student surveys key priorities and action items the student body wants university leadership to address," he says. "My purpose is to amplify the students' voices and ensure they are heard."



Learn more at www.sef.org

#### FROM MY PERSPECTIVE

# Mentoring Transforms Lives at Washington Middle School

By: LaKesha Kimbrough

Success Coordinator at Washington Middle School

I opened my email to see a request I haven't received before. "We have an athlete who was diagnosed with Type I diabetes in high school and would like to work with a student who has also been diagnosed with Type I diabetes." A student-athlete, Jamie Hegg, who had been organizing fellow athletes to serve as volunteers in the Seattle University Youth Initiative, was passing on the request of a peer. The student was seeking to serve as a mentor at Washington Middle School with the Redhawk Academic Mentoring Program (RAMP), which matches Seattle University students with middle schoolers for one-on-one academic and social-emotional mentoring.

With privacy protections we weren't sure how we would be able to fulfill this request. To our astonishment, a few days later a counseling intern walked into the Redhawk Youth and Family Zone at Washington Middle School. "We have a family who is requesting a mentor for their student. He is a sixth grader who has Type 1 diabetes and sometimes uses this to disengage from his classwork. Do you think you might be able to find him a mentor?"

After discussing the program and the parallel requests with the scholar and his parent, it was decided that we would give mentoring a try. Shortly thereafter, track and field athlete Javon Armon arrived to begin working with the sixth-grader.

At the initial session, Javon spent time talking with the student, sharing about himself and learning about the scholar. Javon shared that he was an athlete at Seattle University and was diagnosed as diabetic in high school. Hearing this caused the scholar's eyes to widen just a bit. The scholar shared that he hadn't met anyone, outside of

his family, that he could really talk to about it. Over the course of their time together, they worked on assignments, talked about various things, played games and discussed what it meant to live with Type 1 diabetes.

The bond created through mentorships transcends so many social constructs and lines, enriching both of their lives.



(Left to right): Jamie Hegg, Javon Armon and LaKesha Kimbrough

#### A MOVEMENT OF HYPER-LOCAL STRATEGIES

# Increasing Language Access for Local Families By: Erin Naomi Burrows

The Seattle University Youth Initiative Family Engagement Programs have been actively working toward increasing accessibility in programs by recruiting a team of Seattle U students to provide enhanced language access. Over the past year, five bilingual Seattle U students, three Seattle Public School instructional assistants and one community member paired up with families whose primary language is not English to bridge gaps arising from language barriers. The team provided interpretation and translation in Mandarin, Cantonese, Spanish, Somali, Oromo and Vietnamese during programs held throughout the year.

Gia Ledesma, family engagement manager for CCE, emphasized building the expectation of being able to access all information during Youth Initiative programs such as weekly Read and Rise sessions, family field trips and Saturday science events like Kid Wind. "We're proud to say that we had staff at every program this year who could serve in the role of a language liaison," she says.

Providing a person to team with families goes beyond traditional translation. "We want to move toward this idea of having language or community liaisons—someone in the space who can open the door to feeling more comfortable filling out an info form or asking questions about the school. These liaisons can serve as an ally to families to ask for clarification. Relationship building is key to this transformation," says Ledesma.

Ledesma recruited the language team with an assets-based approach. "We recognize that Seattle U students who grew up bilingual or multilingual have a powerful skillset and we rely on their cultural and language skills to ensure that everyone feels a strong sense of belonging at the school," she says. "We've noticed over the school year that more families are choosing to participate in multiple programs over the course of the year."

Xiaolin Huang, a Seattle U junior in international business, was a key part of the language team as a speaker of Mandarin, Cantonese and English. "I felt a sense of belonging connecting to families that I share a culture with and helping them communicate," she says. "I feel like I'm needed and have value. It's been great to help others. I was given a role that embodied more than my expectations."

With many morning and weekly sessions housed in the new family room at Bailey Gatzert Elementary School, Ledesma and her team work to build a sense of familiarity and comfort. "In many ways school systems can be overwhelming for families. By offering a consistent presence in the school to communicate in a parent or caregiver's native language, the Family Engagement Program is actively creating space for families to feel more equipped to navigate their child's education," she says. "We've identified creating a safe space in the school as one of our main priorities. By providing language liaisons, we're playing a key role in families feeling more comfortable engaging with the school."

"I felt a sense of belonging, connecting to families that I share a culture with and helping them communicate. I feel like I'm needed and have value.

I was given a role that embodied more than my expectations."

Xiaolin Huang, '20



### A MOVEMENT OF HYPER-LOCAL STRATEGIES

# The Place-Based Justice Network

Over the past five years the Center for Community Engagement has provided leadership and staffing to a national effort, the Place-Based Justice Network. The Network had a watershed year in 2018-2019 as 20 universities became inaugural members. These founding members signed on to the core values and purpose of the network: a learning community to transform higher education and our communities by deconstructing systems of oppression through placebased community engagement. Staff and faculty from the member institutions collectively committed to pursue place-based community engagement, a long-term and geographically specific commitment that focuses equally on campus and community.

To support continuous learning of the network, staff from eight different universities host-facilitated conversations on the topics such as intersectionality, family voice in community partnerships, humility and what liberation can look like in the context of place-based work. By leveraging technology—in this case, Zoom—to connect across time zones and contexts, participants reflected on approaches, challenges, values and models to deepen their own initiatives. Place-Based Justice leaders coupled this digital space with two in-person gatherings.

In December, leaders from each member campus were invited to gather at Saint Mary's College of California where participants discussed anti-racist practices, models of place-based partnership, community voice and shared governance of the network.

In July 2019, teams from the member institutions gathered again for the 6th Summer Institute hosted by Augsburg University. Augsburg is embedded in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood of Minneapolis, home to the largest Somali community outside of Somalia. During the institute staff from the Augsburg Sabo Center for Democracy and Citizenship led site visits to several neighborhood partner organizations. The Institute also featured reflections from Dr. Tania Mitchell on critical service-learning, break-out sessions by leaders from across the country and candid plenary sessions exploring race, power and relationship building. Perhaps most importantly, the Institute created space for colleagues to reconnect and forge new relationships enhancing the Network's emerging culture of continual improvement and increasing their ability to influence the field of community engagement in higher education.

## Place-Based Justice Network Members

St. Mary's College of California Loyola University Chicago Santa Clara University University of San Francisco Whitworth University Gonzaga University Seattle University Creighton University

Augsburg University

University of Maryland, Baltimore University of New Brunswick Regis University Saint John University of San Diego University of Pittsburgh

Fairfield University

**Drexel University** 

Georgetown University



Learn more about each member school at www.seattleu.edu/pbjn



The Summer Institute was hosted by Augsburg University in Minneapolis.

### TOWARD THE HORIZON

# FUTURE PLANS

In the coming year, the Center for Community Engagement will further connect campus and community through several new and growing networks. Much of this will be under an umbrella of a new vision for the Seattle University Youth Initiative (SUYI), a recommitment to our changing neighborhood. While honoring our long-term partnerships, we will bring new residents and community partners to the table to build a more equitable collective.

**EARLY LEARNING:** Building on the success of the Jumpstart program at Seattle U, new CCE staff member Lupita Torrez will lead coordinated efforts in the neighborhood to support our youngest neighbors (birth to age five) and their families. Community-led work will partner with families, teachers, administrators, care providers and neighbors to ensure children are ready to succeed in kindergarten. Three core strategies will be implemented: convening parents and caregivers as leaders, connecting existing early learning organizations and programs and coordinating Community Learning Circles, an inclusive networking and workshop series held quarterly.

PLACE-BASED JUSTICE NETWORK: More than 20 universities have signed on as members of the Place-Based Justice Network. The network, staffed and led by the Center for Community Engagement, will continue to unite campus and community leaders committed to deconstructing systems of oppression through place-based community engagement. In March 2020, the Placed-Based Justice Network will offer an embedded institute at the National Campus Compact Conference in Seattle.

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT NETWORK: Seattle University is in the planning phase to launch Seattle's first Local Improvement Network for elementary school communities and their neighborhood partners. With support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Center for Community Engagement and the College of Education will serve as Seattle U's intermediaries in

developing the new network, which will utilize improvement science to close elementary math gaps by focusing on social emotional academic development among local preschool and elementary school students.

COMMUNITY OF ENGAGED FACULTY: In April 2019, 35 Seattle University faculty from multiple disciplines gathered to discuss how to deepen and expand community engagement through the university's academic enterprise. This inaugural gathering of what has been dubbed the Community of Engaged Faculty led to the creation of recommendations to inform Seattle U's overall strategic plan and direction. The Community of Engaged Faculty plans to continue to meet this year to pursue their recommendations.

CCE ALUMNI AFFINITY GROUP: Last year's celebration of 15 years of connecting campus and community catalyzed a group of active alumni to build a network of those who engaged in the community during their time at Seattle U. Join the group on LinkedIn or send your updated contact information to cce@seattleu.edu to stay in the loop for future opportunities and events to reconnect.







**GROWING OUR STEM IMPACT:** In preparation for sharing space in the new Center for Science and Innovation (CSI), the CCE has convened science and engineering faculty to assess our community-engaged scholarship and teaching and forge new connections in the neighborhood.



# BY THE NUMBERS

CCE Facts for 2018-19

**581** CCE Supported Student Positions in the Neighborhood

## **SERVICE-LEARNING**

2,661

SU STUDENTS

enrolled in a service-learning course

186

**FACULTY MEMBERS** 

taught a service-learning course

270+

PARTICIPANTS

in SUYI anti-racist trainings

400

**COURSE SECTIONS** 

offered a service-learning component

Service-learning embedded into 208 undergraduate course sections, 140 graduate course sections and 52 School of Law course sections





# Jumpstart |

**131** Pre-K students in eight classrooms

**38** Seattle U Corps members

**11,400** hours spent in Pre-K classrooms developing literacy skills
\*120,000 hours since 2008

36% of Corps members completed two or more years of involvement



# SEATTLE U YOUTH INITIATIVE KI2 PROGRAM

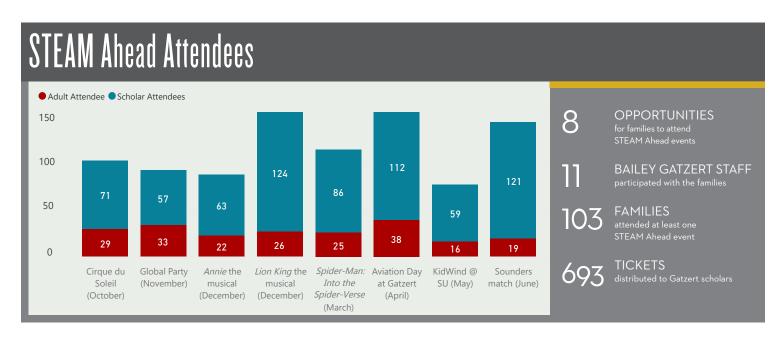
137 SCHOLARS participated in RAMP and ELP activities

58 STUDENT EMPLOYEES
worked at Garfield, Washington and
Bailey Gatzert schools

VOLUNTEERS
supported K12 programming,
many as service-learning students

## **AMBASSADORS & FELLOWS**

- 3 SERVE LOCAL AMBASSADORS
- 4 SHINNYO / FACULTY FELLOWS engaged in year-long placements as Shinnyo or Faculty Engagement Fellows
- 3 SUYI SUMMER FELLOWS supported Summer Learning at Bailey Gatzert and Washington Schools



# WHAT I'LL MISS MOST

# CCE Seniors Reflect



"I will miss pretty much everything! I will miss working with such an amazing team and some of the coolest Gatzert caregivers ever. As for the CCE, I always feel at home when I'm in the office. I'm so sad to be leaving such a warm work environment."

Nicole Freitas, '19

"What I will miss most is the family that so readily took me in when I was new to Seattle U. Transferring in was scary and it was really hard to make friends in my living situation and some of my now fellow ambassadors really brought me into the CCE and I am forever grateful. The CCE is made up of generous Isis Covington, '19 individuals who all have the same

growing desire to engage with folks in our communities in healing and anti-racist ways. I've rarely seen such a committed group of folks, both students and pro staff, anywhere else on campus."



and the many CCE staff I have grown close with over the last four years the most, but I am so grateful that I go forth with the countless and invaluable lessons I have learned from them."

Jesse Goncalves, '19



Annie Bersig, '19

"When I joined Jumpstart in the fall of 2015, my entire world changed. I was presented an opportunity to see kids learn, grow and have fun. I was also presented the opportunity to see the inequities that children in historically low income neighborhoods and schools are

facing and the amazing organizations working to combat that. My college

experience has been shaped by and rooted in Jumpstart and I am very grateful that I am able to continue this work and passion in graduate school. I am so thankful for the Center for Community Engagement for giving me a safe place full of love, advice, support and opportunities for growth."



"What I'll miss the most about the CCE is the welcoming and supportive environment the faculty and students create in the center. The CCE always feels like home."

Katryna Ahloo, '19

"I am going to miss the foundational support and education I received from my mentors, peers and especially scholars. Each have taught me how to look at life with the best foot forward and that it is hard work. Eventually, this hard work pays off in unexpected ways."



# OUR TEAM

#### **CCE STAFF**

AyeNay Abye Colina Bruce, '07, '15 Erin Naomi Burrows Jaycee Coleman Trinity Covington, '17 Barbara Dolby Julie Hurst LaKesha Kimbrough Kent Koth Gia Ledesma Jaime Macadangdang Bonnie Nelson Marquinta Obomanu Elizabeth Seymour, '06 Tammy Shadair, '90 Aileah Slepski Amy Sytsma Lauren Thurlow, '18 Lupita Torrez

#### **AMERICORPS MEMBERS**

Abdi Abdullahi Alexandra Bishop

#### **GRADUATE ASSISTANTS**

Travis Kim Samantha Penjaraenwatana

#### SHINNYO POST-UNDERGRAD FELLOW

Theresa (Tess) Honan, '18

#### SERVE LOCAL AMBASSADORS

Ashlyn Carey, '19
Brandon Bassler, '19
Cameron Casey, '19
Cameron Payne
Erica Calloway
Hillary Sturgeon, '19
Isis Covington, '19
Mariana Renteria Hernandez
Nicole Freitas, '19
Vandela Morales



Center for Community Engagement staff

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