SUNDBORG CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Dear Friends and Supporters of CCE,

“If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” For the past several years a card with this saying has sat on my desk next to my computer. When I need inspiration or simply a break from the screen, my eyes often drift toward the card and these sage words. This year, in particular, as the COVID pandemic has raged on and as our nation has continued to move through an important racial reckoning, I’ve often returned to these words of wisdom.

We can go fast alone or go far together. Is this really a choice? At the Fr. Stephen Sundborg, S.J. Center for Community Engagement, the multiple challenges we face in our local community, our nation and our world call us together to go far to attain justice, to show compassion and to live more sustainably. This report offers a few highlights of our effort to connect campus and community including our new group of Seattle University Youth Initiative family connectors, a new scholarship for Youth Initiative scholars and our many partnerships with faculty, alumni and donors. We have much to celebrate.

As we pause to reflect on the past year, we also turn toward the future. Returning to more in-person experiences, we are thrilled to be in a new office in the recently completed Jim and Janet Sinegal Center for Science and Innovation. We are also excited to welcome our new president Eduardo Peñalver. Adapting to our changing university and community contexts, we are developing new strategic directions that will guide our work for the next decade.

Thank you for your support and partnership. Most of all, thanks for going with us together. We will go far.

With warm regards,

Kent Koth
Executive Director

President Emeritus Stephen Sundborg, S.J.
and CCE Executive Director Kent Koth

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Learn more about our programs and stories at:

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

By turning academic thought into action, the Sundborg Center for Community Engagement is poised to leverage Seattle University faculty, staff and students to partner with our wider community to build equitable systems that support central Seattle’s youth from cradle to career.

This year we are embarking on the co-creation of a multidimensional strategic approach that focuses on program advancement, developing capacity and addressing systemic conditions by:

1. **Strengthening and enhancing the SUYI pathway of learning and enrichment activities** with youth and families living in central Seattle, through the development of additional mentoring, tutoring, afterschool programming and family engagement opportunities.

2. **Fostering leadership through transformative learning experiences** to prepare young people to address structural challenges. We will integrate community-engaged learning into university academic programs and course offerings.

3. **Dismantling oppressive systems through innovation and iteration.** We will serve as the hub for campus and community leaders to incubate and implement systemic solutions to education, housing, the economy, the environment and health care.

This strategic approach is intentionally designed to address the needs of our communities that are threatened by displacement, gentrification and the immense economic impacts of the COVID crisis. By pursuing these strategies now, Seattle University, led by the Sundborg Center for Community Engagement, can significantly contribute to fostering sustainable, equitable and just local neighborhoods so youth can thrive in school and in life.
ENGAGING A COMMUNITY FOR CHANGE

In 2011, Seattle University and its community partners launched the Seattle University Youth Initiative (SUYI), the largest community engagement initiative in SU’s history. Through SUYI, the university partners with the City of Seattle, the Seattle Housing Authority, Seattle Public Schools, dozens of community-based organizations, and hundreds of residents to create a “cradle to career” pathway of tutoring, mentoring and youth development support for 1,000 children and their families living in a two-square mile neighborhood adjacent to campus.

SUYI Family Engagement
SUYI Family Engagement connects home, schools, community and campus to support transitions to kindergarten, middle school and high school. Our work centers family voice and choice and focuses on relationships. Our whole family approach provides culturally responsive programming that supports a variety of ages while building trust and mutual understanding. We utilize two frameworks of family leadership: Dual capacity and the Four C’s—capabilities, connections, cognition and confidence.

SUYI Early Learning Program
SUYI Early Learning Program partners with families, teachers, administrators, care providers and the community to collectively ensure children are ready to flourish in kindergarten and thrive in life. We focus on adults (parents, caregivers, early learning providers) to ensure they have the knowledge, skills and resources to raise children from birth to age five. The Early Learning Program uplifts both the uniqueness of each child and the whole family’s leadership while upholding family identities, such as race, culture and language.

Jumpstart
Jumpstart advances equitable learning outcomes for young children in underserved communities by recruiting and supporting caring adults to deliver high-quality programming to children and drive systems of change through teaching, advocacy and leadership. Seattle U Jumpstart Corps members implement the Jumpstart curriculum in preschool classrooms in Central and South Seattle.

Bailey Gatzert Elementary School
Seattle University partners with teachers, school administrators and staff from local non-profit organizations to provide Bailey Gatzert students and families with academic support and enrichment activities.

Washington Middle School
Our programming for local 6th-8th grade scholars of WMS seeks to be a safe conduit through which scholars and families have opportunities to build, grow and strengthen skills and relationships.

Change Makers
A cohort-based program designed to aid in the successful transition from middle school to high school with an emphasis on academic support and personal awareness. The goal is that scholars are empowered to use their innate power as civically engaged leaders that graduate on time, on a path to college and career. The Change Makers SUYI Commitment offers guaranteed admission and covers the cost of full tuition for four years at Seattle University to Change Makers Cohort Scholars who meet specific program requirements.

CCE Ambassadors
The Sundborg Center for Community Engagement hosts additional opportunities for leadership development in addition to serving youth in the neighborhood directly. CCE Ambassadors are experienced student leaders, responsible for the implementation of programs, recruitment and marketing efforts. Ambassadors exhibit leadership qualities both inside and outside of the classroom, have a strong desire to develop their leadership skills, and demonstrate genuine interest with the CCE’s mission of connecting campus and community to pursue a more just and humane world.

Shinnyo-en Fellowship
Funded by the Shinnyo-en Foundation, these yearlong fellowships are intended to serve as capstone level experience for undergraduate students who have demonstrated consistent, significant leadership on campus and within the community. Fellows are provided opportunities to hone reflective leadership skills, as well as develop, implement and/or introduce the Foundation’s philosophy of peace-building through a project or direct service.

Place-Based Justice Network
Created in 2018 and led by CCE staff, the Place-Based Justice Network is an earning community that strives to deconstruct systems of oppression through place-based community engagement—consisting of 36 member institutions in the US—the Network offers virtual workshops, an annual three-day summer institute, and a fellowship for emerging BIPOC community engagement professionals.
View an interactive map of CCE community partners organized by issue areas on our website at www.seattleu.edu/cce
In February 2021, more than 45 alumni and friends of CCE gathered online to share updates about the center’s work and stories of impact as participants—be it staff, students or supporters—of the Seattle University Youth Initiative. The event served as a virtual reunion and featured an open mic where alumni candidly shared their time with CCE as students and its impact.

Aileah Slepski, founder and manager of the SU’s Jumpstart program reflected, “Now 13 years later, the Jumpstart program has engaged more than 522 corps members: 156,600 service hours at 10 program partners in 21 classrooms with well over 1,600 preschool scholars. I’m so proud of all of that; those numbers are amazing. And what a ride it’s been each day. I’m really grateful for all the dedication from the Jumpstart members and those who supported us and who took a chance on this incredibly impactful program.”

Chantel Lowe,‘11, wearing her classic Jumpstart jacket, shared during the open mic portion, “I was one of the Jumpstart Corps members and Aileah genuinely changed the trajectory of my life. Not even joking when I say that. I was in school to go to law school, on a forensic psych track. I ended up doing Jumpstart as a work study thing and she would tell me all the time ‘You’re going to be such an amazing teacher.’ Every time, she said it to me, I told her she was absolutely wrong. I have now been teaching high school language arts for the last six years.”

Cameron Payne, ‘20, summed up her experience this way: “I think the biggest thing I’ve taken away from my time at the CCE is the importance of relationships.”

Alyssa Garcia, ‘16, offered during the event, “I’m pretty much a lifelong CCE member. I wanted to give a shout-out to the Shinnyo-en Fellows program. My experience helped me get a new job recently from some of the work that I did with youth organizing with OneAmerica. When I think of the things that are most powerful and grounding in my life, I always think about my time in the CCE.”

The virtual event emphasized ways alumni can stay connected to current staff, students and community partners and announced a broader opportunity for SU alumni to provide valuable feedback through the launch of a research project to learn about alumni experiences and the ways in which the SU experience influenced post-college values, behaviors and careers.

Dr. Erica Yamamura, principle investigator for the CCE Alumni Research Project, found in an initial analysis of the findings that “Alumni see the CCE as a place to explore their identities and privileges in a unique way, not in a tokenizing way but a meaningful way. Additionally, alumni reflecting on career formation and impact of their involvement as student leaders in the CCE whether an educator, engineer or entrepreneur, the lessons they learned about what community means they have carried with them in their personal and professional lives after graduating.”
COMMUNITY-ENGAGED TEACHING AND LEARNING

Faculty connect service learning courses with community engagement, with transformative results.

SONIA BARRIOS TINOCO, PhD
Associate Professor and Chair
Modern Languages and Cultures

What’s your “why” of incorporating community-engaged teaching and learning into your classes? What’s meaningful to you about this approach?

I believe in the power of learning through experiences and working together and CCE affords us all—community partners, students, staff and faculty—the opportunity to commit with each other and learn how we can contribute to our common growth. In my classes, my students serve in sites where they use their Spanish in non-academic environments, share with people from Spanish-speaking countries and open their eyes to other realities. Many times, they help kids and adults in their process of learning English and those are beautiful interactions because they themselves understand how vulnerable it makes them feel as they are learning Spanish and are a great support to those they are accompanying in their journey acquiring English.

Will you provide a summary of some of the community-engaged work you and your students did last academic year?

I will always be grateful for the dedication, encouragement and assistance Elizabeth Seymour, Gia Ledesma and the whole CCE team provided to all of us when last year we had to do community engagement remotely. Despite none of us knowing how to carry on this project in novel circumstances, I feel deeply gratified for everyone’s willingness to move forward, learn about language justice and create awareness around this topic that became even more evident in these times.

If you were to offer one piece of advice to another faculty member considering building in community-engaged learning to their coursework, what would it be?

If you have an idea that might seem difficult to carry out or are unsure on how to do it, talk to the CCE team, they will undoubtedly help you figure it out! They are there every step of the way and offer invaluable support.

MCLEAN J. SLOUGHTER, PhD
Associate Professor / Math
College of Science and Engineering

What’s your “why” of incorporating community-engaged teaching and learning into your classes? What’s meaningful to you about this approach?

I’ve always been drawn to community engagement. I’ve always felt strongly that we do best as a society when we all seek out opportunities to connect with and help others. I chose to work at Seattle University in large part because of how much I was drawn to our mission and community engagement is a fundamental piece of that. Additionally, there were two considerations that led me to decide to make community-engaged teaching a core part of our data science program at SU. First, I think that it’s easy to get locked into a mindset of thinking about data science only within an industry/capitalist framework. I wanted to make sure we had a program that gave students a broader perspective of the ways that data play parts in our lives. Secondly, it’s incredibly valuable for students to get experience working on real-world projects. The students get a far better learning experience, they get a chance to learn about and build connections with our community partners and hopefully we’re able to provide some useful assistance to those partners.

Will you provide a summary of some of the community-engaged work you and your students did last academic year?

Last year, the students in my data visualization class worked with El Centro De La Raza. The folks at El Centro were interested in better understanding who their donors were. My students put together a report and a presentation for them that included maps showing where the donors were from, a timeline showing when there were surges in donations and comparisons in donation patterns from year to year.

If you were to offer one piece of advice to another faculty member considering building in community-engaged learning to their coursework, what would it be?

Plan ahead. The more that you can have a plan fully developed before the quarter starts, the more that everyone involved will be able to get out of the experience.
BECKY MCNAMARA, PhD
Lecturer
Matteo Ricci Institute

What’s your “why” of incorporating community-engaged teaching and learning into your classes? What’s meaningful to you about this approach?

First, students are able to apply and deepen their understanding of the course content through hands-on experience. It is one thing to read about educational equity or encouraging family engagement in schools. But through working with community partners, student experience the challenges, opportunities and rewards of this work. They come to know the content intellectually and affectively. Second, students develop important skills such as empathy, humility and intellectual curiosity. This skill building is part of the Jesuit education mission of educating the whole person. Finally, I really enjoy working and learning from community partners. There is so much good work happening in the community! I am a better teacher because of what I have learned from our community partners.

Will you provide a summary of some of the community-engaged work you and your students did last academic year?

Last year, students completed their community-engaged work virtually. My students worked with Washington Middle School to create an infographic encouraging students to become civically engaged. Students also researched and created resource lists for the Family Engagement Program and the Early Learning Program. They explored resources for recreation, basic needs, education and health and wellness, paying particular attention to resources that were low or no-cost and served families from diverse cultures.

If you were to offer one piece of advice to another faculty member considering building in community-engaged learning to their coursework, what would it be?

Open and clear communication with community partners has been essential. Some community partners have be able to have brainstorming sessions with me to find common areas of interest or skill. These discussions have produced creative community-engaged opportunities for the students.
The SUYI Family Engagement Program made a significant series of changes to accommodate evolving needs in the neighborhood during remote learning. One pivotal change was the hiring of a team of Connectors, parent leaders connected to Bailey Gatzert Elementary School who have co-created COVID-safe programs. This includes the distribution of SUYI Education Kits, facilitating online events and doing outreach to the dozens of families with youth enrolled in an online SUYI program. Meet the first three Connectors who have helped shape the future of SUYI’s work to connect campus and community, while centering family voice and choice.

Kayla
Favorite food: Macaroni pizza.
My favorite thing to do on weekend: On the weekends I enjoy going thrifting at Goodwill, watching movies and building huge living room forts with my family.
Hobbies: I’m a night owl and I enjoy crafting late at night while listening to true crime podcasts. I have started a little business out of my customized T-shirts, tote bags and keychains.
“I’m a wife and mom raising two young boys. Living in Seattle has made me realize how much I enjoy being part of the community and learning from all the different cultures. I am also a first-year homeschool mom that is navigating through life with humor, peace and love!”

Shewit
Favorite food: Eritrean, such as Tibisi and Enjera. I also love Thai food and sushi.
My favorite thing to do on weekend: Going to the park and having a picnic, watching movies and listening to music. On Sundays I love going to church and making a special coffee with good food.
Hobbies: Reading, watching films, going on picnics, hiking and spending time with close family and friends.
“I am a mom of two amazing girls. I speak Tigrinya and English and enjoy translating. Helping people is my passion either through my work in the health care field or supporting and empowering families. I believe in equity and justice without prejudice.”

Jeniffer
Favorite food: Anything that reminds me of Hawaii.
My favorite thing to do on weekend: I love to take the kids exploring at new parks.
Hobbies: Sewing, cooking, painting, video games
“I’m a mom to five kids, ages 6, 10, 13, 14 and 15. I love helping families connect through cooking and storytelling. I specialize in advocating for a family’s basic needs and helping them from birth to high school. In my free time you can catch me in the kitchen making awesome home-cooked meals.”

MEET THE CONNECTORS
Family Leaders in the SUYI Neighborhood

(J-l) Lauren Maland, AmeriCorps member, Gia Ledesma, SUYI Family Engagement Manager, Jeniffer, Kayla and Shewit at Yes Fest, a community event at Yesler Terrace on August 6, 2021.
new program launched in academic year 20-21 is bringing the Seattle University Youth Initiative (SUYI) closer to its goal of providing cradle-to-career support for local youth scholars and families. Change Makers, an 8th-12th grade cohort-based leadership program purposed with supporting high school transition readiness, career exploration and building community, provides the foundation for a seamless high school to college pathway. And SU will grant admission and full tuition scholarships to all Change Makers who meet program requirements and choose to attend school here.

“Change Makers focuses on SUYI neighborhood youth who are furthest from educational justice and who, along with their families, lack a sense of belonging in the education system,” says LaKesha Kimbrough, CCE Washington Middle School Site Manager, who oversees the program. “Many are BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color), immigrants and English language-learners. The program’s goal is to ease the transition to high school for scholars and their caregivers and through the 15-member cohort model, to build a strong, lasting peer network.”

AmeriCorps Washington Middle School Coordinator Lauren Maland, who manages the Change Makers program, shares “We really believe in scholars loving learning. Unfortunately, not all scholars get an opportunity to love learning due to barriers in the educational system. Change Makers draws out scholars’ innate skills and abilities in a supportive environment where their love for learning can flourish and they begin to see themselves as capable, college-bound students.”

While in middle school, participating scholars must apply for the College Bound Scholarship, which covers average tuition at public college at more than 65 Washington colleges, universities and tech schools. Scholars must also maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average throughout the Change Makers program, participating in community service and weekly check-ins.

The launch of the initial Change Makers cohort with a group of seven 8th grade scholars was planned for March 2020. Unfortunately, this coincided with the unanticipated COVID-19 closure of Seattle Public Schools, forcing the team to move the program start date to summer as they transitioned the curricula to an online format. The scholars continued to engage virtually throughout the school year, building trust and strong bonds with SU student mentors and with one another. Mentors, community partners and the CCE staff team will continue to support the Change Makers cohort throughout high school. In addition, during 2021-2022 up to eight additional students will be recruited to join this first cohort.

The CCE, with the help of our donor community, will create a new fund to support Change Makers. In anticipation of the first Change Makers cohort entering SU in 2025, the donor fund will help meet the scholars’ needs beyond the cost of tuition.

“We don’t want anything to hinder our scholars’ access to education,” Kimbrough says, “and we know that the cost of student housing alone can impact a family’s decision. We’re working with intention to fully build out the pathway of supports for scholars and families involved with the Seattle University Youth Initiative and this investment solidifies our support from birth to and through college.”
launched at the CCE in 2020, the Learning for Equity Network (LEN) brings together families and teachers to build equitable learning environments for students to experience joy and success in math. The current program emerged from a planning grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The network implements the CCE theory of change by cultivating culturally responsive learning in both school and home and connecting those efforts to grow math resources and learning environments.

This year network partners across six elementary schools in Seattle’s Central District worked together to plan and adapt to the severe implications of the COVID pandemic. For example, school leaders created a shared way to engage and support their teachers with data and teaching techniques, resulting in improved teacher observation cycles and data that highlighted the opportunity for action on math equity.

Network-wide investments created opportunities for schools and community partners to pursue new strategies and meet families’ emerging needs, resulting in new and exciting ways to develop positive math identities for students. For example, South End Stories and their Math through Murals project at Leschi Elementary developed a unit that explored math by using art—offering a variety of ways to explore shapes and patterns. Learners designed patterns with different shapes around their homes, particularly attending to their interests and cultures. At Bailey Gatzert Elementary, school staff and partners used multiple family engagement methods to host virtual summer math programs for families and provide in-home math kits.

Everything developed and learned has set LEN up for a 2021-2022 network learning cycle that leads with family learning and design sessions, teacher learning labs and discussions across the entire network.

A student at Leschi Elementary holds up a Math through Mural Project facilitated by community partner South End Stories.
The Campaign for The Uncommon Good: THANK YOU!

From across the country and world, 27,757 people came together to raise more than $302 million for The Campaign for the Uncommon Good.

At the Sundborg Center for Community Engagement, we raised a record-setting $27.5 million. Although we long benefited from the generosity of a small group of donors, before the campaign was launched in 2013, the CCE did little fundraising. The Youth Initiative helped change that. The Youth Initiative’s ambition to promote thriving communities and supportive pathways for neighborhood youth and their families necessitated an infusion of resources. Over the last several years, campaign volunteers, CCE staff and 569 donors joined forces to secure the funding required to support our efforts.

We want to thank Community Engagement Campaign Task Force co-chairs Maureen Lee and Alan Frazier and committee members Laury Bryant, Gretchen Brennan, Sean Brennan, Val Gorder, Katie Simmons and John McKay. We are grateful for your belief in us and in our work connecting campus and community. And, to all our supporters, thank you. Each gift really does count.

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

Total Raised for the Center: $27,457,636 (110% of campaign goal)
Total Number of Gifts: 1,863
Total Number of Donors: 569
SU Alumni Donors: 166 CCE alumni donors, 29% of all CCE donors
Total Number of Donors New to CCE: 508 or 88% of CCE campaign donors
Total Number of Donors New to the University: 399 or 70% of CCE campaign donors

In grateful recognition of our community of supporters to the Campaign for the Uncommon Good, this donor wall is on display in the new home of the Sundborg Center for Community Engagement in the Jim and Janet Sinegal Center for Science and Innovation.
OUR TEAM 2020-2021

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Images from the ribbon cutting and CCE toast at the new Jim and Janet Sinegal Center for Science and Innovation.