

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



ANNUAL REPORT
2020

SEATTLEU



thanks
for sharing
this journey
with us

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Cover image: Bailey Gatzert Elementary School parents work in the community garden with Ray Williams of Yes Farm, part of the Black Farmers Collective, during a SUYI Family Engagement event.





Dear Friends and Supporters of the Center for Community Engagement,

“When the heart has been touched by direct experience the mind may be challenged to change.” These words from Peter Hans Kolvenbach, S.J. encapsulate so much of what we are experiencing during these difficult and complex times. Direct experiences arising from the pandemic, racialized state violence, global climate change and challenges facing our democracy invite us all to more deeply understand the changes we must collectively pursue for a just, humane and sustainable world.

Reckoning with and making meaning from the challenging experiences we all are facing is at the heart of our work at the Center for Community Engagement. While the COVID-19 virus has led us to approach our work in new and different ways, the Center’s purpose—to connect campus and community—remains the same. This report presents examples of the many innovations we are pursuing during this time of disruption and transformation.

This report also presents the spirit of resilience, justice and long-term commitment that arises from all of you. Whether you are a Seattle U faculty, staff or student, a community partner or leader or a financial supporter, it is your continued action for a more just and humane world that drives the center’s continued success. Even more so, it is your commitment to connect with each other that upholds a sense of hopefulness in a time of significant despair. We are so much stronger working together than acting in isolation or taking no action at all.

Now more than ever, thanks for sharing this journey with us.

Kent Koth
Executive Director

ENGAGING SEATTLE:

Pursuing a Just and Humane World

Collaborating across academic departments to offer a free course to incoming undergraduates

In March, the COVID-19 health crisis made it impossible for admitted students to visit campus. Although nothing quite replaces a campus experience, the Center for Community Engagement partnered with the University Core and the Office of Admissions to create the next best thing for admitted students: a virtual classroom experience exploring Seattle, its many resources and its many contradictions. The team worked with a small group of faculty to deliver this free, two-unit summer course in record time.

The new course, **Engaging Seattle: Pursuing a Just and Humane World** explored significant issues facing Seattle, including the digital divide, environmental justice, racial equity, food security and education. During the month of August, 11 faculty from eight disciplines spanning four colleges taught small sections for the 196 students that registered for the virtual course. There was no charge for students to enroll in the course and the credits can be applied toward a Seattle University degree.

Additional faculty provided video lectures that framed the course topics such as the criminalization of homelessness, gentrification and the arts and intersectionality. Ten peer undergraduate student mentors were hired from nine different majors to support the course sections.

Erica K. Yamamura, associate professor in the Student Development Program in the College of Education shared that, “This is the first time in 11 years that I’ve truly taught across colleges in an interdisciplinary way that was about racial justice. Breaking those disciplinary boundaries was both exciting and challenging—it gave me hope to work with new colleagues in this challenging time. Students were empowered to start to answering questions including, ‘Where’s your action to make a difference? What kind of work are you going to do?’”



“Although Seattle is one of the most progressive cities in our nation,
there are many challenges that need to be addressed.
I believe this class did an excellent job of highlighting these issues
and showing us some ways to begin bringing about change.”

– Testimonial from course participant

The course offered students new to Seattle a great introduction to the city and offered students from the Seattle area a chance to know the city in nuanced and new ways. Dr. Jasmine Mahmoud, assistant professor in Arts Leadership reflected that, “Among an interdisciplinary set of students, we were able to engage, especially methodologically, with foci on observation, mapping, the arts and inquiry. Students practiced critically reading, learning about past and present racist and oppressive urban practices, asking content and methods-based questions, dialogue, embodied practice (through Zoom) and building inquiry-based communities invested in imagining more just cities.”

One student in the course reflected on their experience: “I now have a deeper understanding of Seattle and the underlying issues that plague it. It was very interesting to learn how problems of inequality have persisted and evolved over many decades and still exist today. Although Seattle is one of the most progressive cities in our nation, there are many challenges that need to be addressed. I believe this class did an excellent job of highlighting these issues and showing us some ways to begin bringing about change.”

BY THE NUMBERS

CCE Facts for 2019-2020



CCE led the process for Seattle University to renew its **Carnegie Community Engagement Classification**, an elective designation that indicates institutional commitment to community engagement.



Campus Compact

Seattle University was awarded an inaugural **Impact Award** by Campus Compact in May 2020. The **Richard Guarasci Award for Institutional Transformation** recognizes institution-wide efforts to address issues of public concern by aligning teaching, research, practice and values in service of the common good.



25 families

attended 40 classes hosted in the Family Room at Bailey Gatzert Elementary



45 program sessions

of the Extended Learning Program offered at Bailey Gatzert fall and winter quarters



149 virtual e-mentoring sessions

held with middle school scholars spring and summer quarters



154 elementary and middle School Scholars

enrolled in SUYI programs

The Center for Community Engagement launched a new theory of change that enlists anti-racist methods by centering and amplifying community voice and assets in our work. We measure our success by the Mapp and Kuttner principle of the “4 C’s: Capability, Cognition, Confidence and Connection (2013). Below we pair each C with some highlights from our work this past year.

CONNECTION

SU Family Nights, a series of four events held fall and winter quarters, connected 60 families to 25 mentors and program staff working with their scholars. In response to COVID-19, SUYI staff made intentional efforts to stay connected to families, scholars and SU students.

CAPABILITIES

SU students who engaged over the summer built new skill sets. Peer mentors in UCOR 1910 and mentors at Washington Middle School practiced lesson planning and coordinated meaningful and fun experiences for others.

CONFIDENCE

The CCE Family Engagement team observed families to build upon their existing capabilities to support the Gatzert community and their children including:

- o Enhancing English skills through Family Talk Time
- o Strengthening digital literacy skills through Family Tech Time
- o Developing literacy learning at home through Literacy Kits
- o Teaching and leading workshops for the Gatzert community

COGNITION

Community engagement supports shifts in beliefs and understanding of social justice issues. Jumpstart members reported growth in their understanding of early childhood development, going from 66.7% to 91.4%.

Note that the data for this past year accounts for a suspension of all in-person programming in March 2020 due to COVID-19.



446 *SU students*

engaged in the community as service-learners,
academic mentors, Jumpstart members,
CCE student leaders

5,800 *hours of early
education support*

provided by 38 Jumpstart members in preschool classrooms,
both in-person and online, working with 129 preschoolers

560 *early learning kits*

were delivered in three rounds to 184 families
over the summer in collaboration
with community partners

\$85,000 *of supplies*

distributed to families through Bailey Gatzert
Elementary during the pandemic



Adaptation in the Time of COVID

CREATING A LEARNING NETWORK DURING A PANDEMIC

In summer 2019, with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Center for Community Engagement and the Seattle U College of Education began the development of a network of elementary schools to address educational equity in central Seattle. Building upon the Center's strong track record at Bailey Gatzert Elementary School, Michelle Cruver, the new director of this effort began outreach to five additional local elementary school communities, including Leschi, Lowell, Madrona, Marshall and Muir.

Drawing on Professor John A. Powell's concept of othering and belonging, Cruver notes that the process of developing the network is "not an invitation to a house, it's a house we build together for educational equity. In our effort, the builders are families, community partners and those working in schools."

As the new network was about to launch, the COVID-19 health crisis led to school closures and major challenges for central Seattle families. Responding to the crisis, Center staff pursued new strategies to meet families' emerging needs. Each school received \$17,500 for COVID response summer learning activities. Principals of the six schools also engaged in interviews with an external evaluator, which highlighted the important role that families play in helping students progress, particularly during the pandemic. One principal noted, "The ultimate goal here is to increase student achievement, increase support for parents and increase support for teachers. To narrow the gap between the big three: home, school and community. How can we better move in unison as a team, as one?"

The COVID crisis along with the movement for Black lives highlights the already critical importance that community partners have in pursuing educational equity. With this recognition, the Center focused the investment in the amplification of local community-based projects that provide culturally sustaining programming to youth and families. An external community review panel selected 12 local organizations to provide a web of support to families during remote instruction and as an ongoing strategy to strengthen the home-to-school connection.

The organizations leading these efforts include:

- Africatown Center for Education & Innovation
- The Austin Foundation
- Black Star Line: African Centered Family Educational Collective
- Brainy Babe Tutoring
- Cultivating the Genius of Black Children
- Engageable Designs
- Gatzert Family Partners
- Look Listen and Learn
- Reclaiming our Greatness
- Seattle Music Partners
- South End Stories and the American History Traveling Museum
- South King County Discipline Coalition

The Center for Community Engagement understands that amplifying the work of local community organizations and investing in local schools are only a small contribution to the larger effort of fostering vibrant educational experiences for Black, Indigenous, Latino/a, Asian Pacific Islander, immigrant and refugee families in central Seattle. The emerging network is part of what we hope will be a sustained anti-racist commitment toward educational justice. We look forward to sharing more of the network's stories as we listen, plan and act together for more equitable learning.



The ultimate goal is to increase student achievement, increase support for parents and increase support for teachers—to narrow the gap between the big three: home, school and community.



LOOKING FORWARD



While CCE has faced significant disruption and challenges, we see our current local and national crises as invitations to further evolve. We still have much more to do. Here are a few of our plans for the future:

Deepening Our Commitment to Anti-Racist Practices

Building on our work over the last several years, CCE is redoubling its pursuit of racial equity in all aspects of our work, including our programs, how we spend our funds and how we balance our individual equity work with systems change.

Diversifying Procurement

We are partnering with the Seattle U Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Office of Alumni Engagement and the Office of Procurement to pilot a campus effort to purchase services and materials locally from Black-owned and other people of color-owned small businesses. Through this partnership we are developing a policy and guidelines to increase Seattle U's purchasing from diverse suppliers.

Increasing Language Access

The primary languages in the SUYI neighborhoods are Somali, Tigrinya, Oromo, Spanish, Mandarin/Cantonese, Vietnamese and Amharic. We are expanding our efforts to hire student and family language liaisons, translate documents for families in their home language and utilize professional interpretation as needed to increase access and a sense of belonging for all families.

Build on the Leadership Capacity of Families

This year we plan to launch a new parent ambassador program to support programs and increase outreach to families in the neighborhood.

Virtual Programming to Support Scholars

In response to the COVID crisis, Seattle U students are supporting neighborhood K-12 scholars with remote education by offering a variety of virtual learning supports.

Supporting Seattle U Students through Online Engagement

While most Seattle U students are living and studying remotely because of COVID, we continue to offer workshops, training and leadership development programs through virtual gatherings.



OUR TEAM

2019-2020

CCE STAFF

AyeNay Abye
Colina Bruce, '07, '15
Erin Naomi Burrows, '20
Jaycee Coleman
Michelle Cruver
Barbara Dolby
Theresa (Tess) Honan, '18
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

Alexandra Bishop
Nicole Frietas, '19
Melissa Bacon, '19
Nakiya Baker, '19
Ruth Yohannes, '19

GRADUATE ASSISTANT

Travis Kim

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TASK FORCE

Gretchen Brennan
Sean Brennan
Laury Bryant
Alan Frazier (Co-Chair)
Maureen Lee (Co-Chair)
John McKay
Katie McCullough Simmons



AmeriCorps Team 2019-2020.

SUYI ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

EX-OFFICIO

Val Gorder (*President, Gaard Development, SU Trustee*) and Chair of Advisory Board
Stephen Sundborg, S.J. (*President, Seattle University*)

SEATTLE UNIVERSITY

Natasha Martin (*Vice President, Diversity and Inclusion*)
David Powers (*Dean, College of Arts and Sciences*)
Kristen Swanson (*Dean, College of Nursing*)

SUYI PARTNERS

Evelyn Allen (*Founder and Director, CCS-Village Spirit Center for Community Change*)
James Bush (*Director of Partnership, Seattle Public Schools*)
Dwane Chappelle (*Director of the Department of Education and Early Learning, City of Seattle*)
Doris Koo (*Strategy Advisor, Crescent Collaborative*)
Andrew Lofton (*Executive Director, Seattle Housing Authority*)
Maiko Winkler-Chin (*Executive Director, SCIDPDA*)
Jessica Werner (*Executive Director, Youth Development Executive Directors of King County*)
Susan Yang (*Executive Director, Denise Louie Education Center*)

AT-LARGE COMMUNITY LEADERS

Laura Althoff (*Community Volunteer*)
Carol Ann Barnickol (*Community Volunteer*)
David Bley (*Director, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Pacific NW Initiative*)
Kacey Guin (*Portfolio Manager, Ballmer Group*)
Rodney Hines (*CEO, Metier Brewing Company*)
Maureen Lee (*Co-Chair, Seattle University Campaign and Community Volunteer*)
Isabel Muñoz-Colón (*Senior Program Officer, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*)

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