LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Today, more than ever, I write in celebration of your awe-inspiring dedication to leadership by women and girls. We are at a critical moment in history and I am grateful to have such a caring and committed community standing with the Women’s Center. The 2015-2016 academic year was full of unforgettable experiences that I am so eager to share with you.

We as a society have grown tremendously, and we have much to celebrate in terms of women’s leadership and human rights. It has been an honor to be a part of these successes over the years.

As the Director of the Women’s Center, I am also acutely aware that women and girls are universally undervalued. My heart breaks every time I hear another story of abuse, sexual assault, or of a woman made to believe she is not worthy of the same pay and opportunities as her male counterpart. Thankfully, with your help, we are interrupting these cycles of oppression.

The halls of the Women’s Center are filled with a rich and vibrant history of revolutionary women. Every day, I see that same tenacious spirit in our Women’s Center family of students, staff, faculty, community members and supporters, which is whole-heartedly reflected in our work. I hope after reading this you will feel the courage, inspiration and power that you have helped instill in hundreds of individuals this year.

The gratitude I feel for your dedication to supporting girls and women in their journey in life and leadership is immeasurable. Thank you!

Warm Regards,

Sutapa Basu, Ph.D.
Executive Director, UW Women’s Center

OUR MISSION

To create a more inclusive and compassionate society by promoting gender equity and social justice through educational programs and services that allow all participants to succeed in life.

Women’s rights are human rights. We envision a society where women and men work together to transform social norms.
The 2016 Alene Moris NEW Leadership Institute took place June 13-18 at the Floyd and Dolores Jones Playhouse on the UW Seattle Campus. The 2016 cohort includes 27 women (15 undergraduate and 12 graduate students) who are pursuing degrees from a wide range of fields—economics to chemistry, nursing to philosophy—and who come from equally diverse economic backgrounds.

Twenty-eight dedicated and mission driven leaders from a variety of fields (professors, politicians, lobbyists, non-profit leaders) generously volunteered their time and expertise to train the participants in the skills necessary to pursue leadership positions and to become influential community members. Workshop topics included:

- Effective Communication
- Parliamentary Procedure
- Developing an Action Plan
- Public Speaking
- Resume Review
- How to Build a Powerful Network
- Diversity Training
- Developing an Elevator Pitch
- Salary Negotiation
- Women in Politics
- Realities of Politics and Policymaking
- Getting Ready to Run
- Crossing the Aisle—Diplomacy in Politics
- Non-profit Board Leadership

### NEW Leadership Participants

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<th>Higher Education Institution</th>
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<tr>
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<td>University of Washington - Bothell</td>
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ALENE MORIS NEW LEADERSHIP ALUMNAE ENGAGEMENT

The Fall Fireside Chat with Alene Moris and NEW Leadership Alumnae took place at Piatti Restaurant on November 17th, 2015. The gathering offered alumnae the opportunity to network with the Center’s advisory board members and friends of NEW Leadership in a supportive and empowering environment. The reception was followed by an intimate conversation with Moris, facilitated by WC Advisory Board Member and Alene Moris NEW Leadership Institute Chair, Martinelle Cole. Moris engaged alumnae, board members, and guests on the topic of women’s roles in governance and political action in the United States. She discussed the lack of female presence within the US governing bodies and encouraged women to break the boundaries of political affiliation and come together to stand up for all citizens. Overall, it was an evening of engaging discussion and a great opportunity to mingle with future women leaders of greater Seattle.

DANIELE MEÑEZ
ALENE MORIS NEW LEADERSHIP GRADUATE (2015)

“I knew that I strived to be a leader, but I didn’t know what kind of leader I could be—and what kinds of opportunities existed to help me get there. My time at the [NEW Leadership] Institute allowed me to meet like-minded, passionate peers, learn specific skills such as parliamentary procedure and business etiquette, and learn from empowering women. I learned that there was no specific route to or definition of success—it is about finding what you are passionate about and running with it. The Institute showed me that I had the capacity and support system to become a leader. This helped me as I served as the Director of the ASUW Pacific Islander Student Commission, in which I led the Pacific Islander community through programming and advocacy.”

Daniele Meñez was born on the Pacific island of Saipan and raised on another beautiful island, Guam. She participated in the Alene Moris NEW Leadership Institute as a sophomore.

We are so proud to share that this spring, Meñez ran and was elected ASUW President for the 2016-2017 academic year.

As ASUW President, Meñez will chair the Board of Directors and serve as the official spokesperson for the Association on and off campus. Participating in the university’s shared governance with administration and faculty, she represents the student body by bringing their voices and opinions on the issues to that governance.

Washington Supreme Court Justice Mary Yu receives a standing ovation for her presentation

Dr. Paula Houston shares her journey
RENEE AGATSUMA  
ALENE MORIS NEW LEADERSHIP ALUMNA (2013)

“The Women’s Center has been an invaluable resource for me—from helping connect me with high school students, helping me realize how much I missed my work as a teacher, and also helping connect me with young women leaders all around the state. It has helped re-energize me in my career choice and realize my passion.”

Renee Agatsuma was introduced to the Women’s Center three years ago when she participated in the Alene Moris NEW Leadership Program. Honoring the power of women leaders and role models, she joined the Women’s Center’s village of volunteers, mentoring and tutoring Making Connections students in math and science. Agatsuma and the students she worked with shared a passion for women’s leadership and STEM education. The MC students renewed Agatsuma’s love for teaching, and Agatsuma wove herself into the fabric of the Center even more deeply as our GRE and Basic Math instructor.

Today, she serves as the UW Women’s Center liaison to the American Association of University Women (AAUW), Seattle Branch. In this role, Agatsuma supports collaborative leadership initiatives such as salary negotiation workshops, and informs the student body about AAUW scholarship opportunities and leadership conferences.

Agatsuma is currently an on-leave graduate student in Public Health Genetics. She is interested in how genetic information is understood, and how artists and scientists might collaborate to communicate that. While working on her dissertation, she is teaching high school science to underserved students in Federal Way. She also helps lead FOSEP, a graduate student group interested in the intersection between science, policy, and society.

Agatsuma is an invaluable member of our team and we are forever grateful for her commitment to girls and women in our community.

Students said:
“Renee made the dry subject matter understandable and enjoyable. A joy to be in her class.”
“Extremely thoughtful and engaging. I wish I could have learned math from her.”

LYNA NAFUNA SARAPAI  
ALENE MORIS NEW LEADERSHIP ALUMNA (2013)

Lyna Nafuna Sarapai earned a Master of Laws Degree in Sustainable International Development from the University of Washington School of Law and says that the NEW Leadership Program “rounded out my graduate studies with more nuanced communication and networking skills,” that have helped her in her role of Programmes Liaison in the Office of the Chief Justice of the Republic of Kenya. Sarapai leveraged the leadership lessons from the Program to mobilize resources and manage multi-sectoral programs. She was recently elected the Secretary of the Kenya Women Judges Association and is planning a leadership training modeled after NEW Leadership for members of the Association so that they can be similarly empowered.
MAKING CONNECTIONS

Making Connections (MC) is a proven college-readiness program that provides four years of life-changing, comprehensive enrichment and support services to low-income, underserved high school girls and their families. MC prepares these students to enter college, develop well-rounded leadership skills, and pursue degrees in a Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) field.

LEADERSHIP RETREAT

In 2016, surrounded by the tranquility of nature in the Pacific Northwest, 26 MC students spent a weekend with volunteers and staff, participating in skill-building workshops and delving into leadership topics including confidence building, time management, overcoming fears and challenges, facilitating crucial conversations, and cultivating healthy support systems.

What we heard:

“I never believed I was meant to be, or adequate enough to be a leader. With the support of the Making Connections program and the activities offered at the leadership retreat, I was able to exercise communication skills, time management, decision making, and how to effectively have a tough conversation. This has given me the confidence to become a leader in my community.”

“The most important thing I am taking away from the Leadership Retreat is you have the power to change whatever you want in your life.”

STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD

Making Connections Student Advisory Board (SAB) members meet twice a month to plan STEM, financial planning and life-skills workshops for students and their families. SAB members exercise leadership on workshop curriculum, design community service projects and serve as team captains at the Leadership Retreat and MC Graduation where they managed volunteer recruitment and event logistics.

SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAM

Our July Summer Bridge Program promotes college readiness for girls entering high school. The Summer Bridge Program encourages students to proactively plan their studies for higher education and career choices. Students participate in field trips to Seattle industries related to STEM fields such as health care, computer science and aviation to learn from skillful community and industry leaders with a wealth of experience to share.
2015–2016 HIGHLIGHTS

105 students
24 high schools represented
Leadership retreat
Monthly student-led workshops
Weekly Girls Who Code (GWC) Meetings
5 Girls who Code instructors
26 tutors
38 mentors
189 volunteers
1,738 volunteer hours

30 COLLEGE AND CAREER EXPLORATION EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS INCLUDING:

- MC Kickoff Meeting
- CodeGirl Movie Premiere
- Mentor Bowling Night
- Fall Parent Info Workshop
- Application Night
- FAFSA Workshop
- MLK Jr Day of Service
- Google Job Shadow Day
- EmpowerHer Conference
- Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) Conference
- Boeing Job Shadow Day
- Leadership Retreat
- Mentor Potluck Dinner
- African Immigrant Health Conference
- Spring college tours to Western Washington University and Seattle Pacific University
- Facebook Job Shadow Day
- Camber Collective Job Shadow Day
- MC Graduation

DEMOGRAPHICS:

- 83% African American
- 12% Asian American
- 2% Hispanic/Latina
- 1% Multiracial
- 2% Other

DAFNE PACHECO DOMINGUEZ

Dafne Pacheco Dominguez had always dreamed of going to college, but like many students in her situation, she had a very difficult time believing it could be possible for her. When she was six, Dominguez moved to the United States with her mother and siblings. Despite her mother’s hard work and long hours, it was difficult to make ends meet. Dominguez worked full time when she was not in school, and took care of her younger sister and niece. Being from a single-parent and immigrant household, Dominguez faced many barriers to high school graduation. Yet, she was determined to be the first in her family to graduate high school and participated in Making Connections to realize her dreams.

Making Connections is extremely busy during fall quarter preparing student for college application and scholarship deadlines. The staff, tutors, and mentors are immersed in supporting seniors throughout the college application process, assisting them with everything from writing strategies to choosing colleges. It was during these evenings that Dominguez’s determination really began to shine.

With support, guidance, and encouragement, Dominguez opened up wholeheartedly and began to believe in her goal of attending university. Identifying a passion for nursing, she turned to the UW Women’s Center to guide her towards the tools, experience, and perspective she needed to submit an application that she and her family would be proud of.

Five months of waiting followed. Then it arrived: Dominguez received an acceptance letter. She had been accepted into the University of Washington Bothell’s First Year Entry Nursing Program. Her first stop to share the news? The UW Women’s Center. We could not have been more proud of Dominguez’s “first-generation” resilience and focus.

Dominguez is not alone: all of our seniors exemplified ambition and determination, making our work with them at the Center so fulfilling.
KELSEY’S STORY OF SERVICE

As an AmeriCorps member, I serve as STEM Enrichment Coordinator, for Making Connections. I offer guidance, mentorship, and encouragement to our students by providing resources that will increase their interest and confidence in their knowledge of higher education and career opportunities in the STEM fields.

In June, 100 percent of our 33 MC seniors successfully graduated from their respective high schools. As the focus of MC is college readiness and enrollment, we had been working together towards this moment since September. This year, I recruited and managed 26 volunteer tutors from the Seattle community and University of Washington campus for our essential afterschool tutoring program. Throughout the year, tutors offered schoolwork and college application assistance, guidance, support, and motivation to MC students.

Mondays through Thursdays in late afternoon, students and tutors could be found working together on high school projects, homework assignments, and studying the core academic subjects (math, chemistry, biology, physics, history, and English).

Hana Yohannes was one of our students who regularly attended tutoring each week. She had been an active member of Making Connections since her freshman year. Every afternoon, she was the first person to walk through our doors and she didn’t need any hand-holding when it came to getting to work. Never shy about asking questions, she took advantage of every available tutor. She formed close relationships with our volunteers, and cultivated a personal support system at the Center.

Her determination and will to succeed combined with the help from our tutors enabled her to graduate high school with flying colors and earn a spot at Stanford University.

Hana is a champion. She has overcome personal struggles that are difficult to put into words. Empowered by her experience, she expressed her gratitude to her tutors through the service of helping others and gave back to her community of peers in her spare time. Hana’s inclination to give help after receiving help is a quality I have witnessed often at the Women’s Center in volunteers, staff, and students. It has been a joy to be a part of this generosity and compassion.

Leaders of tomorrow at the Making Connections Leadership retreat
HUMAN TRAFFICKING

CONFERENCE

The 2016 Economic Growth on the Back of Global Workers: Mapping Local Strategies for Global Change Conference was hosted by the UW Women’s Center in conjunction with the UW Department of Trademarks and Licensing. It took place at UW’s wałab?ałtxʷ — Intellectual House on April 22, 2016.

This conference focused on forced labor and migration and asked attendees to consider how they could help build an infrastructure that deters human trafficking and supports victims.

The conference consisted of five panels covering the following diverse topics: Trade Agreements and Forced Migration, Survivors of Human Trafficking and Forced Labor, Tools for Social Change, Ethical Sourcing, Student and Community Activism and Public Health impacts.

ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING UPCOMING PROJECTS:

SUPPLY CHAIN PROVISO

During the FY2015 Legislative session, the UW Women’s Center was designated proviso funding under contract with the Washington Department of Commerce to conduct a two-year study on ethical sourcing and supply chain management of goods and services. Concluding this study in FY2017, the Dr. Basu and Johnna White will finalize its report and offer recommendations for statewide policies and enforcement mechanisms to ensure goods and services procured in Washington were not produced through forced and trafficked labor.

BOOK PROJECT

The Women’s Center is working on a book project that is an anthology of stories of women immigrants. The stories will be collected and articulated by UW faculty and staff as well as women from the greater Washington community. The book aims to highlight the inherent vulnerabilities of this population and how many of these women overcome their struggles as immigrant women. Furthermore, the authors’ hopes to inspire community efforts to protect and empower immigrant women.

CONFERENCE SUPPORTERS

UW Department of Global Health
College of Arts & Sciences
WA Department of Commerce
Tulalip Tribe
Mayor’s Office on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
UW Advisory Committee on Trademarks and Licensing (ACTL)
UW JSIS Center for Global Studies
Mangia Bene Catering
West Seattle Democratic Women
UW Office of the President
Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies
UW Law Global Affairs
Washington State Labor Council AFL-CIO
UW Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies
UW Global Business Center
API Chaya
JACL – Seattle
UW Student Public Health Association (SPHA)
ASUW Women’s Action Commission
Amnesty International UW
National Employment Law Project
Youth Ending Slavery
Community Centered Integrative Practice Concentration at UW School of Social Work
Dr. Suzanna Poppema is a lifelong advocate for women’s health and human rights. In addition to her years of partnership with the UW Women’s Center, Dr. Poppema is the Director of International Medical Consulting and a Founding Board Member of Health, Education, Advocacy, Linkage (HEAL), a nationwide anti-human trafficking network of physicians, researchers, and advocates.

As a member of HEAL and member of Women’s Center Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force, Dr. Poppema is working on the development of a universal toolkit for healthcare providers to identify and respond to human trafficking cases presented in healthcare settings, similar to what is used for domestic violence and cases of child abuse.

Dr. Poppema has been involved in reproductive health care since the first days of her private practice north of Seattle. She was instrumental in writing Clinical Policy Guidelines for abortion care while serving on the Board of Directors of the National Abortion Federation (of which she was President from 1998 to 2000).

Now retired from her private practice and instruction as a Clinical Associate Professor of Family Medicine at the UW, Dr. Poppema continues to teach and present at medical meetings nationally and internationally. Dr. Poppema is the author of the memoir Why I Am an Abortion Doctor, and received her M.D. from Harvard Medical School, completing her residency in Family Practice at the University of Washington.
In August, 2006, Germalyn Pasia was offered what seemed like the opportunity of a lifetime: a nanny job for another Filipino family in the United States. With trust in her employer and the need to provide for her four-year-old son, she made the difficult decision to accept the position and temporarily leave her son in the Philippines. Her boss organized her travel and documents, and soon she was on her way to Bellingham, Washington.

When Germalyn arrived, her new boss outlined her responsibilities: take care of the children, clean the house, do the laundry, cook, and perform any other household need as requested. Her new boss also confiscated her passport, documents, and identification. Germalyn was, in effect, trapped. For the next three years, Germalyn toiled without a single day off. She rose at 5:30am to prepare breakfast, pack lunches, prepare one child for school, and care for the infant. Throughout the days, she cleaned house, did laundry, cooked lunch for the grandmother, picked the son up from school, prepared dinner, and at night finished the ironing and folding. Her typical work day concluded at 9:30pm. All in total, 16 hour days, 7 days a week for 3 years.

On Sundays, she was allowed to go to church with the family, while still performing childcare. Her employer instructed, “If somebody asks who you are, say you are on vacation here.” Bellingham is a small town, where all the Filipinos know each other. Her employers didn’t want Germalyn to talk to anyone.

Unable to speak English and with no connection to the outside world, Germalyn was held captive, severely overworked, and emotionally abused. She saw no hope of change.

“I … didn’t know what to do. I cried all the time because I couldn’t take what they did to me. I begged my employer to send me home because I didn’t deserve this.... She just said ‘No, you have to find your own way to go home,’ even though she had my documents and my money....”

The years of indentured servitude continued until one day, when she was permitted to leave the house, Germalyn saw an opening. At a local store, she noticed another Filipina woman from church. She begged the woman to call Immigration with the hope that they would deport her and she would be able to return home to the Philippines.

The call was successful, but instead of being sent back right away, Immigration detained Germalyn for five weeks. It seemed she had just been transferred from one prison to another. During the waiting period, a nurse identified Germalyn as a victim and intervened. With Germalyn’s permission, the nurse referred her to Emma Catague and API Chaya, a local service provider who was able to speak to her in her native language, learn the tragic story of how she was trafficked, and offer her support and the opportunity to pursue charges against her traffickers.

Today, Germalyn remains willingly in Washington State, has been reunited with her son, and with the support of API Chaya and the Filipino community, is rebuilding her life.

Germalyn’s story of forced labor and human trafficking is regrettably one of many in our community. We are so thankful for her courage in sharing it with us at the 2016 Economic Growth on the Back of Global Workers Conference.
ONGOING PROGRAMS

RE-ENTRY
The Women’s Center continues to serve UW’s non-traditional returning students through our re-entry program. In September, 2015, we hosted an orientation targeting women ages 25-65+ who are starting their first year or first year back into academic life. Speaker topics included: perspective from fellow re-entry university women, financial aid, childcare assistance, disability resources, student counseling, violence prevention and response resources, career services, and library services. Additionally, the Women’s Center counsels returning women throughout the year via phone and in-person appointments.

LIFELONG LEARNING
The Women’s Center to offers SAT, GRE, and basic math prep courses to UW students and the greater Seattle community at an accessible cost.

GRE/BASIC MATH
“Well organized and to the point. Gave enough resources to continue practicing on our own time.”
“I liked how much material we covered ... this class helped guide me in how to study for the test.”
“Explanations were clear, examples were helpful, and the instructor’s enthusiasm made the class great”

SAT
“I really like how knowledgeable the teacher was — he seemed to really care about the class and and our advancement”
“The inclusion. Lots of opportunities to be involved”
“The strategies were very helpful and I would not have known these tricks without the class”

VIOLENCE PREVENTION/GENDER EQUITY
Throughout the year, the Women’s Center hosts various events and trainings focused on violence prevention and gender equity. Below are a few highlights.

SEVEN
On March 6, the Women’s Center and Mt. Holyoke College Club of Puget Sound’s SEVEN production sold-out an 850-seat venue, kicking off The March to MARCH campaign. SEVEN is a documentary play that highlights the stories of seven brave women who fought for the well-being of women, families, and children around the globe. SEVEN has now been translated into more than 20 languages. It has been seen by audiences in 32 countries.

The play’s cast featured The Hon. Christine Greigore, former Washington State governor; Grethe Cammermeyer, retired National Guard colonel; The Hon. Mary Yu, Washington State Supreme Court justice; Hia Yin Yin Waing, Director of the Center for Ethical Leadership; Teresa Mosqueda, Washington State Labor Council; Dr. Gloria Burgess, leadership consultant; and Dr. Sutapa Basu, Director of the UW Women’s Center. Directed by Anita Montgomery, Lecturer UW Department of Drama.

Due to popular demand, the Women’s Center co-sponsored and Dr. Basu performed in a second production of SEVEN, hosted by the Zonta of Everett Foundation, a chapter of Zonta International on June 17, 2016.
SEXUAL ASSAULT & CONSENT WORKSHOPS

We thank Coach Chris Petersen for inviting the Women’s Center to host a sexual assault prevention workshop for the entire UW football team and staff. The Women’s Center included a survivor from our community and together discussed consent, sexual assault, and rape culture with the team. Players overwhelmingly reported in their evaluations that the workshop was very useful, informative, and that they gained tremendous knowledge on the subject.

For the third year, the Women’s Center and donors Mikey Herring and Jim Phelps sponsored renowned sexual assault prosecutor and educator, Anne Munch. In partnership with UW Compliance Services Title IX Office, Munch held conversations and trainings with UW first responders.

START SMART SALARY NEGOTIATION WORKSHOP

The Women’s Center hosted three salary negotiation workshops to bring awareness to the issue of the gender pay gap, to encourage and equip UW students to confidently, and to successfully negotiate their starting salary. These workshops were conducted by Senait Habte, Johnna White and Martinelle Cole.

- **MARCH 30, 2016** Start Smart Workshop offered in partnership with the Samuel E. Kelly Ethnic Cultural Center and AAUW-Seattle
- **APRIL 12, 2016** Start Smart Workshop offered at the request of and in partnership with the Department of Engineering Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) program and AAUW-Seattle
- **JUNE 17, 2016** Start Smart Workshop offered for the Alene Moris NEW Leadership Institute; co-sponsored by AAUW-Seattle

START SMART

“Critical information that I’ve never gotten before”

“So helpful and informative; it is also a crucial step we can take for ourselves. I will definitely be using this.”
AAUW-SEATTLE

The Women’s Center and AAUW maintain a strong working relationship that includes opportunities extended to the greater UW community as well as Women’s Center-specific programming. This year the Women’s Center hosted an AAUW-Seattle chapter monthly meeting, welcoming UW students to attend and learn more about their inherent benefits. As a campus partner, the Women’s Center’s membership to AAUW offers UW students free e-membership, access to member-only scholarships, fellowship and internship opportunities, and access to the Start Smart Salary Negotiation workshop.

Through this partnership, the Women’s Center selected one current UW Making Connections alumnae student to attend the three-day National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCWSSL) in Washington, D.C., with all expenses paid by an AAUW-Seattle scholarship. As a part of this experience, our student was able to choose from more than 50 workshops that prepare students for life after college, meet inspiring role models including Women of Distinction awardees and speakers, build a national network with access to approximately 100 graduate schools and employers, and harness the confidence and skills to return to our campus and community ready to take action.

For the second year in a row, AAUW awarded three Women’s Center nominated Making Connections high school seniors for their achievements in math, science, and technology. The students received their award at the AAUW Scholar Recognition Reception.

Furthermore, the AAUW-Seattle branch was a generous sponsor of our annual Gala event, political day of our NEW Leadership Institute, and all three of our Start Smart Salary Negotiation workshops.
WOMEN OF COURAGE: TURNING THE TIDE GALA

On February 27, 2016, the Women’s Center hosted a resoundingly successful gala, WOMEN of COURAGE: Turning the Tide, which raised over $265,000 contributing to a total of nearly $495,000 in gifts and grants raised this year!

The sold-out event featured President Ana Mari Cauce as the evening’s keynote speaker who inspired the 400 attendees with her vision for the University and her thoughts on women’s leadership. Making Connections alumna, Mahlet Assefa, a recent Yale graduate and an incoming UW Medical student, shared her story of resilience and perseverance. The Center’s video highlighted a graduating Making Connections student, her high school experience, and path to finding her love for nursing through the MC program. To see the video, go to: vimeo.com/157757625

Throughout the evening, the Center presented nine Woman of Courage and two Man of Integrity awards. The 2016 honorees come from different generations, ethnic backgrounds, and occupations but share a commitment to support the advancement of girls and women in society. These exceptional women and men have invested in our community and turned social, political, and cultural tides away from inequality and toward a more just, compassionate, and equitable future. To read the honorees’ full biographies, go to: bit.ly/2kN3pAS

“The challenges that women face must be addressed not just for the sake of the girls and women who deserve the chance to become leaders, but also for the world that desperately needs those leaders — a world that needs the talents of everyone.”

—Ana Mari Cauce, UW President

President Cauce and Dr. Basu with honoree Mahlet Assefa

2016 GALA HONOREES

WOMEN OF COURAGE
Mahlet Assefa
Holly Barker, PhD
Joanna Plichta Boisen, JD
Phyllis Campano
Ninfa R. Gutierrez

Monica Harrington
Naria K. Santa Lucia
Jane Park, JD
Usha Varanasi, PhD

MEN OF INTEGRITY
Stanley Habib
Paul Shoemaker
The 2016 Women of Courage: Turning the Tide Gala was a great success raising over $265,000 to provide women and girls education and resources to achieve personal, professional, and academic success.
MAHLET ASSEFA, GALA SPEECH

My parents took turns working day and night shifts, 12-16 hours a day most days. When they were home, no matter how exhausted they were, they made sure to check our homework and cook homemade Ethiopian food to last us for the week. But unlike in Ethiopia, we didn’t have relatives living nearby and didn’t know our neighbors well. So while they worked overtime, my sisters and I learned to take care of each other.

Inspired by how hard mom and dad were working, I decided, at age ten, and as the oldest in the family, that I was going to step up. I started helping my mom with cleaning the house, showering my sisters, braiding their hair … And I took it upon myself to help my sisters with their homework so dad wouldn’t have to think about it after 16 hours on his feet. Like all of my peers, I was a full time student but in my free time, I took care of my sisters.

High school was a different beast. I went to a high school with one of the highest dropout rates and highest rates of teen pregnancy. It was then that I began to fully understand the cyclical nature of poverty and I knew I needed to find a way to push myself forward. And if that wasn’t enough, I continued to experience racism. Some of my classmates made comments like, “Did you wear shoes in Ethiopia?” and “Of course Africans party—that’s why they all have AIDS.”

So you can imagine that when I found Making Connections, it was a breath of fresh air. MC taught that getting into college was more than just about good grades; it was also about being a balanced individual. They provided me with a mentor, Kelly O’Boyle. Kelly worked at Boeing. She met with me on a regular basis to discuss my goals and progress.

Senait Habte encouraged me to use my summers constructively, so I participated in summer research and studied for the SAT. MC also held an event on financial planning for my family and I, including tips on completing the FAFSA (financial aid form for college). We toured various colleges in Washington and when I thought I settled on a school, Senait asked me, “Didn’t you say you wanted to travel? To live in a different community and get to know the rest of the country? What better time than now? Why not apply to Yale and a few of the other schools we talked about?”

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO OUR 2016 GALA SPONSORS:

[Image of sponsors]
My initial reaction was “Why bother? An expensive application to only be denied acceptance. And what if I did get in? Could I handle the disappointment of not being able to afford the tuition?” But, you don’t really say “No” to Senait, so I did it.

Then I got in. When I did, my mom asked Senait and I to show her where Yale was on a map. She said, “Not my child.” Too far for weekend visits. Maybe even too far for Thanksgiving and spring break. We didn’t have any relatives in the area. But somehow MC staff convinced us to take a closer look. My parents were still working long hours and couldn’t make the trip with me. So Senait and Sutapa decided Senait would take time off from work and we flew to the east coast for “second look” weekend at Columbia and Yale. She brought pamphlets back for my parents and discussed with them the merits of the school.

Looking at all that MC did to get me here standing in front of you reminds me of a quote from Sutapa. She said, “Nothing is beyond or beneath us.” And really that’s true.

In reflecting on all of the things I’ve gained as a MC student, I realized that what they were really doing was giving us the skills to become resilient people. They not only paired us with mentors but hit home the importance of connecting with advisors in every sphere of life. MC also encouraged us to forge our own paths to accomplish our goals. And they challenged us to interrogate the way we think about and talk about ourselves and those around us—to know that happiness and self-satisfaction precede success, and not the other way around.

These skills translated into all that I did throughout college. I had many advisors who saw me through some incredibly difficult times.

I am proud to stand before you tonight as a graduate from the Yale University Class of 2015 and an incoming medical student at the University of Washington School of Medicine.

I am grateful to many people for supporting me over the years, but most of all, I want to thank my parents, Making Connections, and everyone in this room. Without your constant support of a program like Making Connections, I don’t know where my peers and I would be today. YOU helped me achieve my goals, and words can never express how thankful I am to you. Because of your generosity, Making Connections offered me exposure, guidance, and lessons I will take with me for years and years to come—and even more, the Women’s Center has created a community, like the one in my house in Ethiopia that I want to give back to and be a part of for the rest of my life. Thank you!

Alene Moris and Dr. Basu celebrate 30 years of friendship, mentorship and fierce feminism.
The Women’s Center is immensely grateful for the support we receive to run our programs.

In 2016, approximately 64% of our finding came from the generosity of gifts, grants, and sponsorships of our programs, services, and students. The following programs are funded completely by individual donors and private foundations:

- Making Connections
- Human Trafficking Research and Policy Development
- Alene Moris National Education for Women’s Leadership
- Gender Equity and Violence Prevention
- Re-Entry Programs for Returning Students

**WOMEN’S CENTER GIVING:**
The Women’s Center received nearly $495,000 in gifts and grants during 2016, a **27% increase** over 2015.

**SCHOLARSHIPS**
The Women’s Center gratefully offers two scholarships annually:

- **The Meena Vashee scholarship** is a $2,000 scholarship awarded to a UW survivor or child of a survivor of domestic violence.
- **Habib Family scholarship** is a $4,000 scholarship awarded over the course of four years to two MC alumnae who are incoming UW students.
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We welcome Colleen Ferris, Senior Vice President, Regional Sales Manager, Wells Fargo to the 2016-2017 Advisory Board.

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The Women’s Center is housed in historic Cunningham Hall, the first building built for women in Washington in 1909. Since its inception 100 years ago, the Women’s Center has served the community in a multitude of ways—including acting as meeting place for the suffragists who fought for women’s right to vote in our State. These meetings culminated in Washington being the fifth state to award women the right to vote in 1910. The Women’s Center at Cunningham Hall continues to serve the women and girls on campus and in the community.