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OUR MISSION

FIUTS connects students to local and global communities through programs that build international awareness, cross-cultural communication, and informed leadership.

OUR VISION

FIUTS envisions a global community tied to the Pacific Northwest in which people around the world are connected through friendship, mutual respect, and a commitment to international understanding.
DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE

Since I came to FIUTS in 2006, I’ve had the honor of meeting thousands of young people from more than 100 countries around the world. And each year, as a new class of students leaves the UW to begin their professional careers or continue their scholarly work, I am filled with hope for the future of the world.

FIUTS has seen a lot of change over the past nine years – a remarkable increase in the number of undergraduates choosing to study in the US, a more connected and prepared international student community, an increasing focus on and demand for leadership development. Through it all, FIUTS has created and delivered innovative programs while remaining true to the core of our mission and to the interests and needs of our community.

2014/2015 was a wonderful year at FIUTS, and I’m thrilled to share some memories and highlights with you in this annual report.

Highlights of our year include:

• Increased leadership training and support for FIUTS Facilitators through a series of “FIUTS Leadershops”
• A new partnership between The Seattle Aquarium and the FIUTS International Student Orientation program
• Another wonderful FIUTS CulturalFest event, including additional opportunities for K-12 classrooms to attend the event
• Deepening collaborations across campus to provide comprehensive support for new and struggling international students and scholars
• Expansion of after school programs in local schools through a partnership with Powerful Schools
• The second year of the FIUTS Study of the U.S. Institute with Student Leaders in Journalism and New Media, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State.

At FIUTS, optimism is contagious – the students we work with are passionate about taking what they learn at UW and FIUTS and using it to make the world a better place for all of us. As we look forward to another busy year, I know that each day is an opportunity. A chance for FIUTS students and scholars to practice the skills they will need to promote curiosity, understanding, and respect as they become leaders around the world.

— Era Schrepfer, Executive Director
FIUTS STUDENT PROGRAMS

When new international students and scholars are admitted to the University of Washington, one of their first experiences is the FIUTS International Student Orientation Program. In the fall, the ten-day International Student Orientation program includes large-scale welcoming events, social activities, and more than 50 information sessions covering useful topics for new students to prepare them for their experience. In September of 2014, 1,628 new international students took part in a FIUTS orientation program.

“You did a great job! FIUTS orientation exceeded my expectations by far. It has made my first few days here in Seattle much easier, I’ve learned a lot about Seattle and the UW and met a lot of interesting people. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for me. Thank you!”
— Anonymous new student, in the orientation survey

Coming to a new country to study can be challenging, and it can be especially hard to make friends in a new place. From hiking to art museums, FIUTS Events & Activities support exploration and provide a sense of community for students far from home. FIUTS offered 81 events in 2014/2015 under this program (37 paid and 44 free). 1,565 unique participants from 57 countries took part in at least one event. In addition to our ongoing calendar of events, large-scale special events take place throughout the year, including the FIUTS Halloween party and Global Gala, a year-end celebration.
Once a month, the FIUTS community comes together at **Wednesday Lunch**. This free event provides a community meeting space, free food, and a place for students to connect with each other outside of the classroom. **The average monthly Wednesday Lunch attendance in 2014/2015 was 183. The largest group was in October (367); the smallest in June (117).**

“I know how to say some version of “hurry up!” or “let’s go!” in like a dozen different languages now. I am more confident leading a diverse group of people and more flexible sharing leadership with others. Honestly, I have gained so much through my interactions in FIUTS...”

—Anonymous FIUTS Facilitator, in the facilitator survey

**FIUTS Leadership Programs** engage students as community leaders and mentors, providing hands-on leadership experience in a cross-cultural context. **In 2014/2015, FIUTS worked with 198 active Facilitators. Of these, 54 were American, representing 24% of the overall Facilitator community.**

The **FIUTS Student Board** is an 18-member group of American and International students who are elected to serve a full year as community leaders. Student Board Members partner with staff and the FIUTS Board of Trustees to align strategy and programs with the FIUTS mission in the community.
FIUTS EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Through partnerships with schools and other nonprofits, FIUTS connects UW international students with children in local classrooms.

In the FIUTS Pen-Pal Program, 4th and 5th graders are matched with UW students and they write letters to each other over six weeks. At the end of the exchange, the children visit the UW on a field trip, and join FIUTS at Wednesday Lunch. In 2014/2015, 66 UW students were matched with 74 local pen-pals.

At Global Ambassador Day, FIUTS brings a group of UW students from around the world to a local school for a few hours, where they deliver interactive curriculum about their home country to groups of children. Last year, 27 students took part in two Global Ambassador Day programs.

Explore the World is a special after school program, where one FIUTS student each week meets with a small group of students through a partnership with Powerful Schools. In 2014/2015, 18 UW students worked with 34 local children in 3 schools.
In the third and final year of the FIUTS Youth Leadership and Teacher Professional Development Program with Bosnia and Herzegovina (YLP BiH), FIUTS worked with 18 youth and 3 educators representing three different religions from towns across Bosnia. **In spring 2015, 4 FIUTS staff members travelled to Bosnia for a reunion event involving 109 participants from the past three years of the YLP BiH program.** The reunion involved a series of activities including presentations from participants about ongoing community development work, opportunities for them to create nation-wide collaborations, and reflection about their experiences in the U.S.

In the second year of the **Study of the US Institute for Student Leaders in Journalism and New Media (SUSI)**, FIUTS welcomed 20 undergraduate journalism students from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, and the Maldives to Seattle for a 5-week intensive program focusing on leadership, US culture, and journalism topics. Each of our SUSI participants is matched with a UW Student Ambassador – a special source of support and inspiration during the program.
Homestay experiences are a powerful way for individuals and families to take place in citizen diplomacy. Each short-term homestay at FIUTS is a rare opportunity to truly understand another person’s viewpoints and experiences. When students have an opportunity to build bonds of friendship with a local family, they gain a “home away from home” that can be an important source of support for them while they are here. And local families have a chance to explore a faraway place by getting to know a young person from across the globe. Many hosts and students maintain long time relationships, creating bonds between families and communities that cross borders and cultures.

**Homestay Placements, 2014/2015:**

156 UW international students from 33 countries with local families for short-term homestays.

Total Welcome Week Homestay Placements: 91 undergraduates, 53 graduates, 12 scholars

71 Homestay placements for short-term programs
FIUTS CULTURALFEST

Each February, FIUTS creates CulturalFest, a public celebration of cultural diversity at the University of Washington. Our entire community comes together to enjoy extraordinary music and dance performances and learn from students at booths presenting about cultures across the globe. Hundreds of students take part in the planning and preparation for the annual event, which welcomes more than 2,000 guests plus hundreds of children from local schools.

“...As a performer, I got to meet so many people who were from different cultures and learn about the part of their cultures that they were presenting. These are normally students that I would not be able to interact with on a day to day basis. I was even able to hang out with one of these students and play music, outside of the FIUTS setting.”

— Anonymous Performer, from the CulturalFest survey
FINANCIAL REPORTING

With the support of donors, corporate partners, the University of Washington, and the U.S. Department of State (DoS), FIUTS enjoyed continued stability in 2014/2015.

REVENUE 2014/2015

- Department of State: $340,000
- UW Contracts: $262,635
- Activity Fees: $59,634
- Fundraising: $59,117
- Endowment: $30,429
- Special Events: $23,470
- Other Program Income: $70,350
- Work Study: $11,725
- Misc. Income: $558
- Total Income: $857,918

EXPENSES 2014/2015

- Salary & Benefits: $364,735
- Travel & Transportation: $183,113
- Food & Bev: $89,919
- General Office: $64,649
- Professional Services: $54,532
- Room Rental: $49,003
- Admission & Fees: $28,798
- Miscellaneous: $12,799
- Marketing: $8,097
- Total Expense: $855,645
FIUTS IN THE COMING YEAR

As we look towards 2015/2016, the focus at FIUTS is on stability and innovation. As we serve a larger, increasingly diverse, and connected community, FIUTS has identified some areas of growth that will allow us to better serve and engage all of our stakeholders.

First, although our student population has changed dramatically over the past few years, our administrative systems have not! It might not be the most exciting work, but in the coming year, the board and staff have committed to the selection and integration of a new technology tool to maintain strong connections with every member of our community – students, alumni, hosts and volunteers, donors, and others.

We also plan to continue our focus on partnerships across campus and in the wider community to provide support and enrichment for current and incoming UW students, both international and domestic. Person to person connections and intercultural experiences are vital to student success and FIUTS plays a key role in convening conversations, inspiring curiosity, and creating opportunities to engage with a global community.

No matter how much things change, the core mission and work of FIUTS remains the same. We believe that respect and friendship are key to building peace and understanding in our communities and across the globe. Thank you for your support of our mission.
The following staff members, community trustees, and UW students provided key leadership in support of FIUTS programs in 2014/2015. Many thanks to each of them for their work this year.

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Brianna Mercker, Manager of Student Programs

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Tom Lang, Education Programs Coordinator
Jean Guth, Development and Office Administrator

Yuka Takamiya, Finance Administrator
Michael Levkowitz, Community Programs Assistant
Billy Nong, Event Assistant
Meredith Stillwell, International Student Orientation Assistant

Interns: Juri Ishida, Yumiko Ishikawa, Momoko Iwata, Louise Iuel, Masakazu Kondo, Stephanie Lam, Rica Murakami, Vorleak Sim, Wakaba Uchiyama, Misaki Yamashita

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FIUTS connects university students to local and global communities through programs that build international awareness, cross-cultural communication, and informed leadership.

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