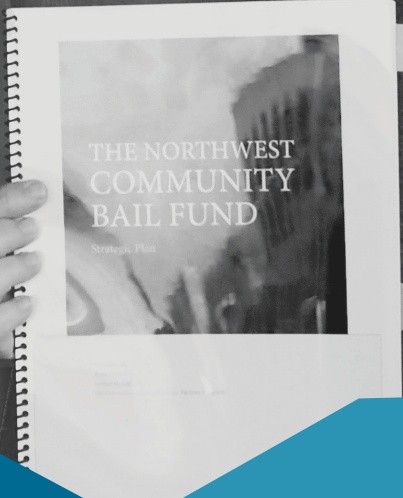




Jordan
Melograna
Rooted in Rights
Comm Lead Student

Mary
Lorien
Northwest Community Bail
Fund



COMMUNICATION leadership

2017 Community Impact Report

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The past year was one of tremendous change. No matter what your convictions, I think we can agree that we need to adjust several assumptions that we might have had about the next few years. From jobs, to the environment to international relations — there are historic forces at work right now. We're seeing them play out very much in real-time around the world.

It's a new reality, and it's stressful in various ways for all of us as we try and adapt.

But here's my certainty. When I think of our wonderful, outward-facing graduate program, I know that this is our moment. We are the storytellers who tackle challenges and spark change through the currency of content and human relationships. These challenges are greater than ever. Who Comm Lead is, how Comm Lead connects, and our unique approach to collaboration and community-building will help provide solutions.

It's why I'm focused less on technology-centric answers and more on how we bolster our "social infrastructure" — the right kind of supportive spaces for convening and communing during times of upheaval.

In the past year we hired and tasked Molly Schachter to redesign and scale how we deploy our students to meet the incredible demand of non-profit organizations who also see story as their solution. By doing so, we offer both a service to our community and "beyond the classroom" experience (along with financial support) to our students, who gain real-world skills and knowledge.

Our collaborations with partner organizations have become a fundamental piece of Comm Lead's success (it's part of the reason we're welcoming our largest ever cohort this coming fall) and it's been made possible thanks to the generous support of our community.

Now our program can partner with organizations across all sectors and support more students than ever before. While we're proud of what we've created, we also recognize the need to do even more as the needs of our growing number of partners increase. It's a challenge we're ready to tackle.

- *Hanson Hosein*





Deepening relationships.

New outreach efforts to engage alumni led to 22% more donors, 17 times more than the 2015-2016 year.

**2016
2017
BY THE
NUMBERS**

A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF PARTNERSHIPS

When I joined the Comm Lead program in January 2016, it was already incredibly connected to the community thanks to our leadership, faculty, students, and alumni. A number of Comm Lead classes worked with clients, different companies hosted us for monthly networking events, and organizations came to us eager to have our students tackle their communication needs.

While the connections were vast and plentiful, we lacked any sort of system that would allow us to streamline our collaborations and scale our success. The solution? The Partner Program.

Thanks to generous donations from our supporters we built a sustainable infrastructure that allows our partnership ecosystem to flourish.

With our streamlined approach, we're weaving organizations through every aspect of the Comm Lead program, increasing our impact in the community, and providing more students with more financial support and experiential learning opportunities than ever before.

Not only does each Partner Program collaboration benefit the students involved, but also Comm Lead as a whole. Our world moves fast and the immediate needs of our partners teach us what skills are needed to succeed in the communications industry today. This knowledge influences the direction of our curriculum and bolsters the educational quality of our program.

The success of Comm Lead is thanks to our community and supporters. We appreciate our partnerships and look forward to growing our network and expanding our reach via the Partner Program for years to come.



Molly Schachter

Increasing Capacity



We raised over \$105,000 in the 2016 - 2017 academic year, which more than doubled our fundraising capacity.



Supporting students.

Private financial support was awarded to almost 25% of our students.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

The experiences students engage in with partners beyond the classroom enhance their degree and are often the highlight of their time in the program. Our students collaborated with more organizations in the 2016-2017 academic year than ever before. To celebrate this, we shine the light on a select a few below.



When the time came to launch the Partner Program, Comm Lead enlisted the help of current student **Scott Morris**. Using his experiences in the program as the framework for project-based fellowships, Scott shaped how students approach partner collaborations. He is a regular attendee at Comm Lead's partner events and a go-to mentor for his peers.

“The fact that we as students have access to opportunities where we're given a chance to connect with other professionals, companies and employers – it's a dream come true. Comm Lead is a place where we can push ourselves to be creative and make an impact. I honestly believe it's redefining what grad school can and should be.” – Scott



Carrie Hawthorne jumped at the chance to participate in an international adventure with **DFS Labs**, a financial technology incubator funded by a Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation grant that supports high potential entrepreneurs in developing countries.

“DFS Lab's project was a great chance to work in international development. The two weeks in Tanzania was a time of immense growth. At minimum, I gained new shooting and post-production skills, a strong addition to my portfolio, a better grasp of design sprints, new friends from all over the world, a few dozen words in Swahili, and an understanding of a new culture.” – Carrie

Rosa Byrnes partnered with fellow student **Jordan Melograna** to create an integrated advocacy campaign for **Northwest Community Bail Fund**, using their communication expertise to positively impact the criminal justice system in our state.



“Working with NW Community Bail Fund has been an enriching experience. I have learned so much about non-profits, social justice, bail reform and how to tackle real communication challenges.” – Rosa



“As a newly formed organization, we were missing a consistent communication strategy that would allow us to expand beyond our start-up roots. Rosa and Jordan provided a comprehensive, professional communications plan and we’ve been extremely impressed with the high quality and thorough work the students have produced.”
– Mary Lonien, NW Community Bail Fund Executive Director



Ari Adachi came to understand the power of organizational storytelling through her collaboration with Mechanical Dreams, a Virtual Reality production company championing authentic and diverse voices.

“Mechanical Dreams promotes female filmmakers and showcase diverse voices, and it’s these types of bridge building intentions that I will carry with me moving forward. I feel as though I have been shaped immensely by a few months of working beside incredible people doing work that is changing the way we see the world.” – Ari



We as students have access to opportunities where we're given a chance to prove ourselves in real world settings and connect with other professionals, companies, and employers – it's a dream come true.





Expanding our network.

We partnered with nearly 40 organizations across the nonprofit, startup, and for-profit sectors.

PARTNERS

Our partners collaborate with us in variety of ways: host exclusive networking events and workshops, sponsor internships, guest lecture in classes, and have students tackle their specific communication challenges via class projects or fellowships. Below is a complete list of the organizations we partnered with in the 2016-2017 academic year and our method of collaboration.

Organization	Method of Collaboration
2nd Cycle	Content strategy plan for the redesign of their website
Accelerator YMCA	Video to communicate their organizational story
Amazon	Collaborator for Master Class on the future of content strategy and hosted exclusive networking event
AxonVR	Discussed advanced content strategy and the future of communication with students
Clipper Vacations	Content strategy plan for the redesign of their website
Cody	Community building strategy for their online platform and content strategy plan for the redesign of their website
CPRsavesVR	Virtual Reality public outreach initiative to educate citizens how to perform CPR. Initiative was conceived, designed, and implemented by a current student at the direction and under the guidance of program leadership
cut2it	Community building strategy for their online platform
DFS Lab	Organizational storytelling, including: video story, website redesign, and digital marketing strategy and execution
Facebook	Co-created Master Class on the future of content strategy, hosted exclusive networking event, taught workshop on content strategy, and held one-on-one recruitment hours
Farestart	Strategy and communication plan to increase engagement with Farestart graduates and recruit new students
Filson	Organizational storytelling strategy and communication plan to engage new demographics, and hosted exclusive networking event
Flip the Media	Student-run digital media lab to create stories and build communities and digital properties

Fuse IQ	Content strategy plan for the redesign of their website
Invrse Studios	Organizational image creation including design, messaging, and marketing collateral
King County	Hosted exclusive networking event
King County Executive Office	Communication strategy for a key initiative
Living Futures	Interviewed and filmed attendees at Living Future, an annual forum on sustainable building
MarketShare	Collaborator and speaker at Comm Lead community event
Mechanical Dreams	Organizational storytelling via digital marketing
Mighty Media Studios	Hosted exclusive networking event
Nereus Program	Investment in program to launch ocean storytelling initiatives
Northwest Climate Science Center	Organizational storytelling video
NW Community Bail Fund	Integrated advocacy campaign strategy and implementation
NW Film Forum	Content strategy plan for the redesign of their website
POSSIBLE	Hosted exclusive networking event
REI	Discussed organizational image with students and hosted exclusive networking event
Salas O'Brien	Content strategy plan for the redesign of their website
Seattle Chamber of Commerce	Exclusive internship
Starbucks	Discussed organizational storytelling best practices with students
Susan G. Komen Puget Sound	Content strategy plan for the redesign of their website
SXSW	Video and editorial coverage of annual conference
The Center for Communication, Difference, and Equity	Community building strategy for their online platform, content strategy plan for the redesign of their website, and brand development
The Seattle Globalist	Journalism coverage for daily online publication that covers the connections between local and global issues here in Seattle
UW CoMotion	Organizational marketing and communication support, including: brand, video, and social
Washington STEM	Exclusive internship pipeline and video storytelling
WE Communications	Strategy and recommendation of how to tell the WE story to engage new clients
World Vision International	Community building strategy for their online platform



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