THE STUDENT REFUGEE PROGRAM AS A GLOBAL MODEL
> HEAR FROM MICHELLE MANKS

BUILDING MOMENTUM ACROSS CANADA
TANZANIA INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR
AN LC MEMBER’S PERSPECTIVE

UNITERRA: CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH OPPORTUNITIES
BLAST FROM THE PAST
AND MORE!
As you finally get a moment to relax...

We encourage you to thank yourself for all the hard work you have done to mobilize those on your campus and think about how you can broaden your impact in the new year!

LCs got off to a great start this year with providing excellent support to record numbers of SRP students and holding innovative and empowering events. We want to share with you some news and updates about some of the exciting things that happened in Canada and internationally this fall, and what to look forward to in winter 2017!

**WUSC in Numbers**

- **1,046 Volunteers**
- **17,410 People informed**
- **4,962 People engaged**
- **$23,404 Raised**
- **51 Media articles**
- **150 Local Committees (LC) Total**
- **150 SRP students arrived in 2016!** (From 86 in 2015)
- **66 Sponsoring LCs (SRP)**
- **11 New sponsoring institutions**
- **28 Institutions increased sponsorship in 2016**
- **15 Teams in Ride for Refuge**
- **36 LCs visited since Sept 2016**

**Building Momentum Across Canada: Snapshots of 2016-2017 So Far!**

### The Virtual Reality of a Signature Event

**Toronto, Ontario**

On November 3rd, the Ryerson WUSC Local Committee organized a signature event called "The (Virtual) Reality of a Refugee Experience" to raise awareness about forced migration and refugee issues. About 65 attendees followed Sidra, a Syrian refugee girl living in the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan as she took them through a day in her life via individual virtual reality devices in the film “Clouds Over Sidra.” Representatives from the Sidra Project were then available to take questions during a panel discussion.

As Dana Dwaik, secretary of the LC explained, “We focused all of our efforts since the beginning of the school year on one event in order to make it super successful! We were lucky to bring in The Sidra Project to our campus and screen a virtual reality film. The reactions of people who attended our event made all of our effort worth it - we raised awareness in a very interactive way and left a positive impact.”

### 3 Ways to Shine A Light on Refugee Girls’ Education

#### North Bay, Ontario

The Nipissing WUSC LC in North Bay planned a photo-based Shine A Light event on November 9th. Marissa, the LC Co-Chair, shared that their “objective in taking the photos was to raise awareness of the Shine a Light campaign by letting students take a minute to appreciate one thing that truly lights up their life. The LC handed out facts about refugee students to each person that participated in the challenge, and had an overall great response from the student body.

#### Halifax, Nova Scotia

With more than 65 guests in attendance and plenty of fair trade coffee, tea and treats for all, WUSC Dalhousie raised over $600 for the Shine a Light campaign! The spirit of the evening was one of inspiration and positivity as performers shared music, poetry, and personal accounts of the experience of being a refugee girl fighting for her education. With lights out and candles lit, the WUSC Dalhousie coffee house was an important night to shine a light on refugee girls’ education.

#### Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island

UPEI held a “Glow Night to Shine a Light,” which started with a workshop on the challenges girls in refugee camps face with accessing education. They watched some video clips, tried writing and reading in the dark, and read one of the "In this together" letters written by a WUSC SRP student to girls still in the camps. They finished the evening by turning on black lights and dancing the evening away!

### The (Holiday) Magic Ticket to Fundraising

**Brandon, Manitoba**

Sometimes fundraising might be challenging, so getting creative and brainstorming ideas can be a great step towards a successful event. Brandon University shows that it’s possible to fundraise at zero cost by identifying an opportunity and partnering with other groups. The local mall organized a “Holiday Magic Night,” for which charities sold $5 tickets that granted customers access to the mall after 7PM, when stores had special prizes and discounts. The proceeds from ticket sales went to the charities, so the Brandon University LC members worked together to sell tickets, and used social media to advertise. Taking advantage of an event where a local partner took care of many details allowed the LC to focus their efforts and sell 100 tickets!
RIDE FOR REFUGE

On October 1st, more than 80 people coast-to-coast cycled or walked in the Ride for Refuge event to raise awareness and funds for the Student Refugee Program. Here are some highlights!

“Since all of the efforts focused on helping refugees are more than necessary, I wanted to participate in Ride for Refuge. At the same time, one thing is for sure... if I cycled all those kilometers (I haven’t biked since I was 6 years old), it is because WUSC has a very special place in my hear and I strongly believe in its mission.” Clothilde Parent-Chartier, l’UQAM

Ride for Refuge is a great kick-off event for our VIU-WUSC Local Committee. We wore blue shirts and rode or walked from Vancouver Island University to downtown Nanaimo, in order to raise public awareness of the Student Refugee Program. Crystal Huang, VIU

“I truly enjoyed the experience because I was able to, for the first time, raise funds for a cause close to my heart. I also love cycling, so it was the ideal opportunity to combine my passion for cycling and my interest in refugee issues.” Alaa Riahi, l’Université de Montréal

“I participated in the Ride for Refuge to get active with my LC & raise funds to help others out. It was the 1st time I have ever participated in the Ride, and I had an absolute blast biking 25km as the people were so friendly and caring.” Kirissa Kirkup, Winnipeg U of M

“Ride for Refuge was a great opportunity for our local committee and students to bond together as a team. And best of all, we were able to raise a total of $505 for the Student Refugee Program.” Rumaisa Khan, U of T Scarborough

TANZANIA INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

A LOCAL COMMITTEE MEMBER'S PERSPECTIVE

This Fall, LCs in cities like Ottawa and Halifax continued the decades-long tradition of showing another side of their leadership skills by promoting and recruiting dynamic participants for the 2017 Seminar in Bolivia! This group of seminarists will explore the ways in which tourism can influence the sustainable and inclusive development of the economy and communities.

For 5 weeks in the summer of 2016, a recently graduated LC alumna, Heather Dirckze, participated in the International Seminar alongside 16 youth leaders from Tanzania and Canada. In this 70th edition of the Seminar, the focus was on how technology and markets can create a sustainable food future for the planet.

Here’s what Heather had to say about her experience:

“My experience at the International Seminar in Tanzania allowed me to see WUSC from a different perspective than the one I’d previously known as a Local Committee member. I got the chance to see the work of a newly formed WUSC Tanzania and do research in the agricultural sector to find where the gaps are between organizations and farmers. It was such an incredible learning opportunity which required a lot of patience, understanding, and cooperation, and helped me to strengthen my intercultural communication skills.

The best thing I took away from the Seminar is the connections I made, both in Tanzania and in Canada. We’ve all managed to stay in touch and keep the conversation going [...] It’s amazing to be a part of the WUSC and Uniterra networks, and know that I’m included in a group that is empowering people and helping to develop the world for the better.”

“I’m included in a group that is empowering people”
Over the past year, the Student Refugee Program (SRP) has gained even greater visibility, within and outside of Canada. So we asked Michelle Manks, WUSC’s Senior Manager of Campus Engagement and the SRP, a few questions for more information.

Q1: What impact has the work of WUSC sponsoring groups had on the visibility of the program in Canada and internationally?

Because WUSC student groups have been supporting refugees in Canada through higher education since as early as the 1940s, and participating in the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program since 1978, the Student Refugee Program has become a "well-oiled machine," and an interesting model for other countries to replicate. When the provision of scholarships to refugees was "pitched" by Filippo Grandi, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as a means through which countries could increase their contributions to providing durable solutions, the SRP became a key model for countries to adopt.

Q2: Could you tell us about some of the international events at which you presented the SRP?

It began in 2014, when I was asked by the diplomatic adviser to the former president of Portugal if I could present at a high-level meeting on meeting the higher education needs of students from the Middle East. At that time, President Sampaio had recently created an organization called the Global Platform for Refugee Students (GPRS), and we were asked if we would like to be a part of a type of coalition that aims to provide higher education to refugee youth. Since then, we have been participating in events alongside the GPRS and other key actors around the world who are working on these issues such as the Institute for International Education in the USA, the British Council in the UK, and the DAAD in Germany. In September, we co-hosted another high-level side-meeting during the UN General Assembly, at which Antonio Guterres reiterated his support for and the importance of providing tertiary education to forcibly displaced people.

Additionally, we have been presenting the Student Refugee Program alongside the Canadian government, as they strive to share best practices from Canada’s Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program internationally. In March, I was invited to present the SRP during the Pathways for Admissions of Syrian Refugees conference that took place in Geneva, which aimed to identify alternative ways through which countries could meet the protection needs of refugees fleeing Syria. (Read more at: unhcr.org/pathways-for-admission-of-syrian-refugees.html and srp.wusc.ca/reflections-on-geneva/)

In recent months, we have received a number of inquiries from countries around the world who are exploring the private sponsorship of refugees model or education as an alternative legal pathway for refugees. We are supporting colleagues in Australia, Japan, and the US as they explore the possibility of initiating something like the SRP in their countries. In September I was even invited to present the SRP at a meeting in Dublin, which was attended by the higher education community and government in Ireland, as well as Liam Cunningham - who praised the work that Canadian student groups (i.e. WUSCies!) are doing!

(Read more: unhcr.ie/news/irish-story/dublin-conference-hears-calls-for-more-safe-and-legal-routes-for-refugees)

We hosted delegations from the Netherlands and Poland in November, where SRP students and LC members from the Ottawa region got to share their experience with government officials from those countries. It is exciting to see so many countries express interest in replicating the SRP in their own countries.
Q3: What aspect of the SRP interests people the most when you present about it to other countries and organizations?

The unique funding model, which engages entire campus communities is what impresses others, and the fact that the program is youth-led, providing peer-to-peer integration support. Another unique aspect is the pre-departure preparations that students receive, which may be an area where we will be able to support other countries who want to pilot a similar program.

Q4: We know that Antonio Guterres (former UN High Commissioner for Refugees) was recently elected Secretary General of the UN. What does this mean for refugee issues at the international level, and what does it mean for the SRP?

What is positive about this appointment is that we know Mr. Guterres won’t let forced migration and refugee issues fall off the radar as they UN deals with a number of competing important issues.

Q5: What is the role of postsecondary education in the response to the refugee crisis?

The world is recognizing what Canadian institutions and student groups have known for decades, that higher Education is critical to rebuilding a country post-conflict, that it is necessary to providing incentive to completing secondary school, and that it is a powerful tool for integration. There seems to be a general recognition that the higher ed community are uniquely placed to contribute to the response to the refugee crisis, and during the Pathways to admissions conference in March, 13 new countries made commitments to increasing Scholarships and "educational pathways" for refugees this year (including Canada’s immigration minister, who pledged to support the growth and export of Canada’s SRP) (Read more: theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/mccallum-to-pledge-expansion-of-refugee-programs/article29428312/)

“We expect that we will continue to be called upon to share our lessons learned and the SRP as a strong model for others to explore - not only as an educational pathway, but as a unique model of private sponsorship”

Q6: With all these changes, what does the future of the SRP look like, at the international level?

Following Canada’s recent commitments to build the capacity of other countries that were announced during the UN General Assembly (Read more: news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1126819), we expect that we will continue to be called upon to share our lessons learned and the SRP as a strong model for others to explore - not only as an educational pathway, but as a unique model of private sponsorship. As the forced migration crisis worsens, countries are aware that they must be creative and look towards non-traditional partners as actors. Since WUSC has a great deal of experience in this area, we feel that it is important to share our expertise so that we can collectively increase the number of durable solutions for refugees, and ensure that a greater number of the world's most vulnerable youth have a chance to continue their education.

LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER FOR STRONGER LOCAL COMMITTEES ACROSS CANADA!

Between August and December 2016, hundreds of you, Local Committee members and staff, participated in trainings across Canada!

The WUSC-Uniterra Leadership Meeting in August brought together LC leaders from across the country to network and learn from one another as they participated in sessions ranging from ethical consumption workshops to understanding the mental health needs of newcomers to Canada.

Regional Meetings were held in the fall in Toronto, Halifax, Winnipeg, and Quebec City to bring together Local Committees in these regions to strategize about how to raise awareness and funds and strengthen the LCs on their campuses.

This year’s Regional Liaison Officers (RLOs), Diana, Hippo and Carolyn have also been visiting many LCs in their regions to provide support!

By far, participants most enjoyed meeting other WUSC leaders “with the same goals and learning from their experience and sharing different ideas to implement on campus” and “meeting diverse people from across Canada and establishing new connections.”
This year came with many changes, including a renewed focus on ethical consumption among our youth network in Canada through the Uniterra One World campaign! So far this year, LCs across the country have shown those on their campuses and in their communities that our purchasing choices have an impact on the lives of others, and that we can make them count. These efforts to influence businesses and consumers to operate more ethically connects to Uniterra’s work with facilitating knowledge exchanges between ethical businesses around the world.

**Levelling the playing field for ethical businesses...**

International food and trade fairs, like SIAL, bring together those in the food industry to connect with buyers in Canada, the US and many other countries. Events like this are critical opportunities to build relationships and grow businesses, and are not always easily accessible to small businesses in developing countries that are focused on sustainability and empowering communities. This summer, the Uniterra Program, with help from determined volunteer Christian Clément, extended this opportunity to 8 partners from 3 Latin American countries (Peru, Guatemala, Bolivia) who would not otherwise have had access.

These ethical businesses, which focus directly on people and the environment in their countries, included the ACOPAGRO (organic cocoa) and the Oro Verde cooperatives (organic cocoa, cane sugar, coffee). There were also 3 young women entrepreneurs specializing in chocolate, including Francesca from Q’uma. This inspiring group had the chance to participate in other activities to build on their businesses, like a training at the Chocolate Academy, and meeting with buyers in Canada committed to ethical consumption, like La Siembra and Miss Choco.

**… One step at a time**

The exchange of knowledge continued with 3 Canadian chocolate companies going to Peru. Miss Choco, Chocolats Monarque and Chocolaterie Le Cacaoyer visited cocoa producers and ethical chocolate companies there, some of which came to Canada with the Uniterra program. These chocolatiers transform cocoa beans into chocolate from A to Z (“Bean-to-Bar”), sourced from groups of small producers, some of whom are ethnic minorities.

These 2 events created opportunities for ethical businesses to succeed and empower marginalized people, and for Canadians to have more options for consuming ethically. For instance, Francesca, was able to build a partnership with a like-minded Canadian-based business, and explained:

“This wouldn’t have been possible without your support, so many thanks again for making Q’uma available in the Canadian market!”

The two sides of the ethical consumption puzzle are equally important for the brighter future of people around the world: Creating opportunities for ethical businesses to participate in markets, and encouraging consumers to purchase thoughtfully. Each One World activity that LCs organize to educate and encourage community, campus and individuals to care about the impact of their purchases on others can lead to buyers in Canada paying attention to where and how they source products!
There have been many exciting changes to the Ottawa WUSC Campus Engagement and SRP team in the past few months, including the arrival of two new team members: Kathi and Ashley. We welcome both of them warmly, and look forward to working with them in the continued development of the SRP!

KATHIRASEM SUBRAMANIAM

Kathi joined the SRP team in September 2016 to take on the task of developing a new mentorship program that will engage SRP alumni in providing support to newly arrived refugee students. SRP Mentors will not only provide additional integration support to the rapidly growing number of new refugee students arriving in Canada, but will also play a more active role in developing and delivering the trainings offered to Local Committees to prepare them for sponsorship. Kathi will also be exploring new ways in which WUSC can facilitate refugee students’ pathway to employment, and will be leading this year’s impact and tracer study of past SRP students and volunteers. Kathi has extensive international corporate and education sector experience. He developed networks within the business community and created internships and job placement opportunities for graduating students. At WUSC, he facilitated successful participation and integration of newcomers into the Canadian postsecondary education system and society.

ASHLEY KORN

Ashley joined the Campus team in Ottawa in November 2016. She has held several roles at the YMCA of Greater Toronto in new immigrant and refugee settlement programs; most recently as National Manager of a provincial program that provides case management to Government Assisted Refugees; and a youth pre-arrival support program. Ashley has also been an active contributor to WUSC and the SRP since 2009, providing orientations and integration assistance to refugee students in both Malawi and Canada. She has assisted International Organization for Migration in Kenya, helping develop the Canadian Orientation Abroad, Refugee Youth Curriculum. Ashley holds a Masters degree in Immigration and Settlement studies from Ryerson University, and has contributed to a number of publications related to understanding factors that contribute to effective resettlement and integration of refugee populations, with a focus on youth, and the role of information and the impact on the resettlement experience.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

The early years of the SRP, University of Western Ontario, Photos by Michel Plante

Ethical Consumption, Brock University, WUSC groups have been supporting producers from developing countries for decades to promote ethical consumption. The roots of the Uniterra One World campaign go back even further than we expect, with WUSC student groups being amongst the early leaders in the movement in Canada that promotes fair wages and trade.

WELCOME ASHLEY & KATHI!

Tunisia, Photos by Josée Lafleur

Cross-cultural learning & collaboration have been a part of WUSC’s work for over 65 years - through all the fashion and hair-style trends!
**Sometimes in April:** A Hutu soldier (Idris Elba) tries to get his family to safety during the Rwandan genocide, while years later his brother stands trial for his actions...

**Beasts of No Nation:** As civil war rages in Africa, a fierce warlord (Idris Elba) trains a young orphan (Abraham Attah) to join his group of guerrilla soldiers... See the trailer here

**The Good Lie:** A group of Sudanese refugees given the chance to resettle in America arrive in Kansas City, Missouri, where their encounter with an employment agency counselor forever changes all of their lives.

**The Foods that Make Billions:** Looking at how big business feeds us. Starting with yoghurt...

**From Army Camp to Refugee Camp to Campus to City Engineer** | Daniel Mach | TEDxUManitoba

**Radio Congo: Signals of Hope from Africa’s Deadliest War:** In this compelling debut, Ben Rawlence sets out to gather the news that never travels far - the news from the uneasy peace being made in Congo's 'silent quarter'.

**Seven Syrians: War accounts from Syrian Refugees:** A voice is missing from the international debate on the Syrian War. Throughout the conflict, world leaders have focused discussions on chemical weapons and radical fundamentalists while the Syrian...

**Human Cargo: A Journey Among Refugees:** A portrait of the lives of today’s refugees cites an alarming percentage of the world’s population that has been forced to abandon home and family in order to survive, sharing the personal stories of...

**Citizens of Nowhere: From Refugee Camp to Canadian Campus: An inspiring story of courage, adaptation and development— a year in the life of 11 refugee students entering universities across Canada.

**The Ripple Effect** | Heather Thomson | TEDxBishopsU 2016

**A Journey of Purpose:** From Refugee Camp to University | Rhoda Philip | TEDxTerryTalks

**Poverty inc.:** The West has positioned itself as the protagonist of the development narrative. But the results have been mixed, in some cases even catastrophic, and developing world leaders have become...

**The first grader:** When an old villager insists on attending school so he can learn to read, everyone learns that it's never too late to dream...

**God grew tired of us:**... the ordeal of three Sudanese refugees [...] as they try to come to terms with the horrors they experienced in their homeland, while adjusting to their new lives in the United States...

**Ayen’s Cooking School for African Men** Tells the story of a Sudanese woman in Australia who opens a cooking school for young Sudanese refugee men who have been resettled in Australia.

**Memories of a Generation:** This documentary about an Ethiopian refugee by Aaron Floresco’s received the UNESCO Audience Choice Prize at the Films for Peace Festival, in Medea, Italy.

**Everybody’s children:** A year in the life of two teenage refugees [...] who have left their own countries to make a new life in Ontario. Delmos follows them as they bear the normal pressures of being a teenager while simultaneously undergoing the refugee application process.

**An Inconvenient Truth:** Filmmaker follows Al Gore on the lecture circuit, as the former presidential candidate campaigns to raise public awareness of the dangers of global warming and calls for immediate action to curb its destructive effects on the environment...

**The Illegal - Lawrence Hill** All Keita has ever wanted to do is to run. Running means respect and wealth at home. His native Zantoroland, a fictionalized country whose tyrants are eerily familiar, turns out the fastest marathoners on earth...

**Razia’s Ray of Hope, Elizabeth Sunby:** Razia dreams of getting an education, but in her small village in Afghanistan, girls haven’t been allowed to attend school for many years...

**Stepping Stones: A Refugee Family’s Journey, Margriet Ruurs:** This unique picture book was inspired by the stone artwork of Syrian artist ... The author ... tells the story of Rama and her family, who are forced to flee their once-peaceful village to escape the ravages of the civil war raging...

**For more reading:** [www.amnestybookclub.ca/index.php/books/ru/](http://www.amnestybookclub.ca/index.php/books/ru/) or visit the Canadian Council for Refugees library (http://ccrweb.ca/en/library)