Mission

To empower immigrant and refugee women and girls to succeed through advocacy and culturally competent services.

Vision

WISE envisions a world where immigrant and refugee women are honored for their wisdom, celebrated for their leadership and empowered to create change.
Our past year of service has seen many additions to WISE’ work. The agency stepped up to provide accessible professional development opportunities to people working with immigrant and refugee youth though its quarterly all-day conferences featuring local experts. Our 2019 conferences touched on a variety of topics: trauma, resettlement, parent engagement, healing through art, resiliency, telling our story, self-care, secondary trauma for youth workers, and international work with refugees.

The WeLEAD (Women’s Education & Leadership) program coordinator position increased from less than half-time to a full-time position; and the participant level grew to 35 immigrant/refugee women ages 16-30 years. The model for the program expanded to include summer workshops focusing on life skills such as buying a home, understanding employee benefits, negotiating a salary offer, and financial planning. Eleven WeLEAD students graduated in 2019, and one student continued on to graduate school in social work.

Our Girls Getting Ahead in Leadership (GGAL) program expanded in 2019 to include another afterschool program. Washington Technology Magnet School has a school-day GGAL class during the last hour of school (which has a waiting list due to classroom capacity). The students asked if WISE could also offer an afterschool session because some of the girls were behind in credits and could not take the elective class. GGAL also provides afterschool GGAL sessions at the Oromo Community of Minnesota.

The Healthy Relationships program was represented in GGAL through workshops on gender-based violence prevention, healthy friendships and relationships, communicating your boundaries and needs with family/friends/partners, gender identity and reproductive health. GGAL students were encouraged to speak up for themselves and share their opinions.

2019 also saw three steadfast board members finish their terms and move on to other opportunities. We wish Sajya Singh the best in medical school, Rebecca Khankari in her new endeavors, and Tedla Kefene in his career! Three new board members joined the board: Stela Center, Ra’Wi Mahamud, and Eliana Reyes. They bring enthusiasm, skills and cultural knowledge to WISE that will be instrumental in continuing progress on the agency’s strategic plan.

WISE’ staff continue to go above and beyond their job descriptions to bring excellent ideas, work and collaborations to the agency. We could not do the caliber of services we provide without their professional and insightful work. Thank you Pakou Khang, Nancy Vang, and See Lee. Our Community Solutions Fellows, Florence Malorbah Dorley, Getrude Dyabene, and our VISTA member Nabiha Mansoor enriched our work and added their energy to the mix. Thank you to all of our mentors and interns. We literally could not do this work without your generosity of spirit.

We all look forward to the new year, new programming, and new opportunities. Thank you for your support of WISE!
Girls Getting Ahead in Leadership (GGAL) is an academic, leadership and college preparation program for underserved and at-risk immigrant/refugee girls in 6th-12th grade. This program utilizes self-empowerment workshops, consistent academic support, and the development of relationships with college mentors to achieve positive student outcomes.

WISE is in partnership with two school and community sites to provide GGAL programming:

- Washington Technology Magnet School
  5/10 Program
  After school hours

- Oromo Community of Minnesota
  After school hours

“GGAL is a program that helps you get better at English and helps you prepare for college.”

- CE V.
  GGAL Participant
GGAL

*Division of activities in GGAL

In-class Activities 46.8%

Field Trips 16.4%

Volunteerism 2.1%

Fundraising 2.1%

Homework Help 31.1%

Guest Speakers 1.5%

Guest Speakers 1.5%

Financial Literacy Workshops (Budgeting, reading bills, writing checks)

Self-Identity Workshops (journaling, reflection, writing)

English Readiness

Academic Writing

Leadership Development

College Preparation

DIY Arts and Crafts

Gender and Sexual Identity

Resume and Cover Letter Writing

Career Exploration Activities

Minnesota State University-Mankato

Cloud State University

Feeds the Hungry Children's Society

Barnes and Noble Bookstore

Animal Humane Society

Valleyfair

St. Cloud State University

Career Exploration Activities

Resume and Cover Letter Writing

Gender and Sexual Identity

DIY Arts and Crafts

English Readiness

Academic Writing

Leadership Development

College Preparation

*Division of activities in GGAL

What I See In A Friend

Trustworthy

Someone you can trust and they will do their best back to you.

Real person

A person who is real and genuine.

Kindness

Someone who is kind and cares about others.

Helpful

A person who helps others.

Loyal

A person who is loyal andtrue to their word.

Respectful

A person who shows respect for others.

NCW

A person who is NCW

GCW

A person who is GCW

Friend
The Women’s Empowerment and Leadership (WeLEAD) program was started in 2014 as a means to help immigrant and refugee women navigate post-secondary education and prepare them for the workforce. In addition to academic and one-on-one support, professional workshops are hosted to help our program participants build their network and skills. WeLEAD provides continuous leadership development opportunities to help young immigrant women live in a safe environment free from violence. Some workshops and activities include:

- Homeownership
- Career Exploration
- Mock Interviews
- Cover Letter/Resume Writing
- Mock Interviews at Dress for Success
- WeLEAD intern, Mai Mong, leads a session on Career Exploration
- WeLEAD participants participate in mock interviews at Dress for Success
- WeLEAD participant, Rita, gives a speech at the 2019 GGAL Luncheon
- WeLEAD participants at Self Care Night

"I have increased my self-esteem. I learned to be more confident in myself. I have also learned to be positive about my education and goals."

- PAW DA EH

Former WeLEAD participant
BS Human Services, Metro State University 2019
The Healthy Relationships program activities in 2019 covered a broad range of topics that are all aspects of understanding oneself and having healthy friendships and relationships.

Students explored the meanings of gender identity, sexual orientation, female reproductive health, improving communication skills, and the components of a healthy relationship. They identified what made a good friend, how to be a good friend, and what they wanted from their friendships and relationships. The girls played games like Snowball DV to find out more about domestic violence and dating violence, UNICORN gender identity to learn about the array of gender identities and their fluidity, and LGBTQI Bingo to learn terms and facts about sexual orientation. The students learned about menstruation and menstrual products in a safe space to ask any question that came to mind. The girls had workshops on communication, understanding that communication styles differ and are influenced by culture. Girls are always encouraged to speak up for themselves, whether it is with friends, teachers or family.

Healthy relationships are also discussed within the context of career goals, i.e. considering waiting to enter a serious relationship or get married until after they have graduated from post-secondary education. The Healthy Relationships program reinforces the message that girls have the right to decide their future, their relationships, and their goals.

GGAL participants match and share facts on gender-based violence.
Our volunteers are the cornerstone of our programs and make the work we do possible. Volunteers take on the role of mentor for our GGAL and WeLEAD program participants, and typically help out running enrichment activities, supervising field trips, and helping students with homework.

Our volunteers are both undergraduate students and working professionals in the Twin Cities area.

“I enjoyed getting to know the GGAL students at summer sessions and am looking forward to learning more about where they see themselves in the future!”

- Lilliana, GGAL Intern

Intern Highlights

Lilliana Kay
GGAL Program Intern

Lilliana is a student at Macalester College majoring in Psychology with a minor in Anthropology. She hopes to pursue an MSW after graduation.

As the GGAL Intern, Lilli helped facilitate activities, supervised field trips, and helped input student data.

Mai Mong Lao
WeLEAD Program Intern

Mai Mong has a background in Dental Assistantship from MCTC and is currently pursuing a pre-social work degree at Inverhills Community College.

During her time at WISE, Mai Mong helped lead career workshops, implemented participant surveys, and helped solicitate in-kind donations for WISE.

Our volunteers are both undergraduate students and working professionals in the Twin Cities area.

“I enjoyed getting to know the GGAL students at summer sessions and am looking forward to learning more about where they see themselves in the future!”

- Lilliana, GGAL Intern

Academic majors of Mentors & Interns

- Psychology
- Human Services
- Retailing and Consumer Behavior
- Global Studies
- Political Science
- English
- Gender Studies
- Youth Studies
- Sociology
- Journalism
- Liberal Arts
- International Business
- Economics
- and more!

26 total volunteers

2,219 service hours

Where our Mentors & Interns come from

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UMN</td>
<td>46%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Normandale</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Thomas</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macalester</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro State</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates/Professionals</td>
<td>27%</td>
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Mentor, Cathy, chatting with GGAL students.

WISE intern, Katrina, leads a GGAL activity on Friendship.
Getrude Dyabene, Tanzania CSF19

Getrude researched other Twin Cities nonprofits serving youth from immigrant and refugee communities to see what services they offered and which populations they served. WISE is interested in establishing an informal association of immigrant/refugee youth-serving nonprofits to share resources, best practices, lessons learned and leverage collaborative funding.

Florence Dorley, Liberia CSF19

Florence researched best practices on social enterprise and small business development for immigrant/refugee women. She also identified other agencies who offered training in these areas and developed a survey to help women learn more about starting their own business.

Community Solutions Program Fellows

The Community Solutions Program is a professional leadership development program for the best and brightest community leaders worldwide. Community Solutions Fellows complete a four-month fellowship with a U.S. nonprofit organization or local government agency. Fellows return home to apply their new skills through a community action project.

In 2019, WISE was a host site for two CSP Fellows. Our Fellows developed projects that were not only beneficial to WISE, but were also transferrable to projects in their home country. Our Fellows presented their work at WISE’ Trauma, Resiliency and Healing Conference in November.

Learn about the Community Solutions Program.

Learn more about our Fellows
Social Media Outreach

**SOCIAL MEDIA DATA**

**Facebook**
- 1,373 Followers
- 1,299 Likes
- +228 in 2019
- 20% increase
- +137 in 2019
- 11.8% increase

**Twitter**
- 109 Followers
- 137 in 2019
- 11.8% increase

**LinkedIn**
- 23 Followers
- Email
- 109 Subscribers

**WEBSITE DATA**

**14,937** page views

**7,260** unique visitors from **99** countries

**TOP VISITORS**
- USA 83%
- India 2%
- China 1.5%

**Most common webpage visits for 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Visits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
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<tr>
<td>Our Mission &amp; Vision</td>
<td>1,259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join Our Team</td>
<td>925</td>
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<tr>
<td>About Us</td>
<td>904</td>
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<tr>
<td>GGAL</td>
<td>880</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRH Conference</td>
<td>713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upcoming Events</td>
<td>627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Team</td>
<td>570</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Search Engine, 36.70%**

**Direct, 41.44%**

**Referral, 5.73%**

**Email, 0.36%**

**Social Media, 15.77%**

**Website Traffic Source**

- Facebook, 95.83%
- LinkedIn, 2.81%
- Instagram, 1.36%
- Twitter, 1.27%

*Referral indicates redirects or links to WISE from other websites*

**FUNDRAISING 2019**

**49** total donor transactions

**$55,330.42** total raised in individual and major gift donations
2019 Events

- EAT FOR EMPOWERMENT FUNDRAISER FOR OWE
- WELEAD CHIPOTLE FUNDRAISER
- GGAL COOKIE SALE
- GGAL ART SHOW

Staff Retreat

- QUARTER 1 STAFF RETREAT | April 12
- QUARTER 2 STAFF RETREAT | June 28
- QUARTER 3 STAFF RETREAT | September 30
- QUARTER 4 STAFF RETREAT | December 23

Board/Staff Retreat November 16

- HEALING YOUTH THROUGH ART CONFERENCE | April 26
- GGAL LUNCHEON: LEAD LIKE A GIRL | May 18
- HOMEOWNERSHIP WORKSHOP | June 22
- GIVE GENERATIONS ART COMPETITION | June 30
- TRAUMA, RESILIENCY AND HEALING CONFERENCE | November 8
- GGAL HENNA FUNDRAISER | December 18
Top Countries by Refugee Arrivals into the US FY2019

- Dem. Rep. of Congo: 46.6%
- Burma: 17.4%
- Ukraine: 12.3%
- Eritrea: 6.3%
- Afghanistan: 2.2%

Top Countries by Refugee Arrivals into MN FY2019

- Dem. Rep. of Congo: 46.7%
- Burma: 18.7%
- Ukraine: 8.9%
- Somalia: 8.6%
- Eritrea: 6.6%

65.6% of English Learners graduated high school on time in 2018 compared to 77.7% of native English speakers who graduated on time.

79% of immigrant youth live in the Twin Cities.

9% of the US immigrant population reside in Minnesota.

34% of students enrolled in Saint Paul Public Schools is an English Learner.

46.1% of English Learners enrolled in post-secondary education in 2018 compared to 62% of native English speakers who enrolled.

33.5% of foreign-born Minnesotans hold a bachelor’s degree or higher.

775 refugees resettled in MN in 2019.

US REFUGEE CEILING
18,000 FY2020
30,000 FY 2019
45,000 FY 2018

Refugee Allocation FY 2020
- 5,000 Refugees fleeing persecution and violence
- 4,000 Iraqi refugees with US ties
- 1,500 Refugees from El Salvador, Guatemala, or Honduras
- 7,500 Others: refugees, reunifications, approved resettlements

Read more about refugee allocation requirements.

Source: migrationpolicy.org, MN Department of Human Services, American Immigration Council, MN Compass, SPPS

INVEST. IMPACT. EMPOWER. REPEAT.
WISE raised a total of $758 on Give the Max Day, exceeding our goal of $500!

Donors who contributed towards our $500 goal were entered in a drawing to win a WISE t-shirt! Congratulations to G. Ortega for being the lucky winner!
In 2020 WISE will be expanding its programs to include a Parent Encouragement component to the Girls Getting Ahead in Leadership program, and conducting a two-year sexual violence prevention project at Washington Technology Magnet School under the Healthy Relationships program. The Parent Encouragement component will work with parents of GGAL participants to express their concerns and hopes for their daughters, teach them how to advocate for themselves and their children, identify concrete ways in which they can support their daughters academic success, and encourage them to set expectations for that their daughter’s go on to post-secondary education.

The Healthy Relationships program will work with the GGAL program participants to develop sexual violence prevention messages and media to be shared with the entire student body at Washington Technology Magnet School, on social media and posters. The youth will work with community artists to design music videos, white board animation videos, and new messages each quarter through a poster campaign. The Program Coordinator will host Active Bystander Intervention trainings for the Oromo, Karen and Thai communities; and will train the GGAL participants on sexual assault prevention and active bystander intervention strategies. Active Bystander Intervention is a model that uses different strategies to interrupt a potential sexual assault by either a direct intervention (i.e. she looks pretty drunk we’ll give her a ride home), distracting the potential offender (I am so sorry I spilled my drink on you let me help you clean it up), or delegating assistance to another person or entity (i.e. school resource officer or law enforcement).

WISE has been exploring designs on social enterprise/small business development models to work with immigrant/refugee women. In 2019 the agency conducted research on current offerings in the Twin Cities and developed a survey that will be given this year to a broad group of immigrant/refugee women to ascertain their interest and needs in receiving training and support to open their own business or collective.

UPCOMING EVENT

Give Generations

In 2019 WISE hosted an art competition in search of a visual to represent our 2020 Give Generations Silent Art Auction. Thank you to Juliette Myers for her outstanding portrayal of the immigrant and refugee women experience! Look forward to her work at our auction this summer 2020.

julietteperinemyers.com  IG @juliettepm_art
2019 Individual Donors

Thank you to the individuals who made a generous gift to WISE in 2019. Your ongoing investment provides general operating support that contributes towards the quality of our programs.

Aleksandra Alcheva  
Anonymous (4)  
Aye Nyein San  
Barbara Pinckney  
Carol Steinberg  
Caskey Skotnicki Family Fund, The Minneapolis Foundation  
Cheryl Field  
Christy and Lyndon Shirley Charitable Foundation, Fidelity Charitable  
Colleen Hamilton  
Franklin Tolbert  
Ge Vang  
Gloria Ortega  
Hannah Clark  
Jena McDermott  
Jenna Drier  
Joseph Maternowski  
Kabo Yang  
Marina Gazel  
Ramlo Mohamed  
Rebecca Khankari  
Selam Talihun  
Stela Center  
Stephanie Warne  
Suwah Tobah  
The Purple Tree  
Thomas and Marjorie Mairs Fund, The Saint Paul Foundation  
Warren and Brenda McGuire

2019 Grantmakers: Foundations, Corporations, and Organizations

Thank you to the following foundations and giving programs for investing in the expansion and improvement of our organization:

Allianz  
F.R. Bigelow Foundation  
Mardag Foundation  
Medtronic Foundation Volunteer Grant Program  
The Thrivent Women’s Leadership Network Giving Circle, inFaith Community Foundation  
The Saint Paul and Minnesota Foundation  
Thrivent Financial Foundation  
Wells Fargo Community Support Campaign
2019 Collaborators and Partners

Thank you to the individuals and organizations that have collaborated with WISE to offer their skills, expertise, and resources for our conferences and programs:

- African Immigrants Community Services
- Chef Peter Vang
- Chia Lor
- Chitpole
- Dawn Buttera
- Dress for Success
- Edison High School
- Eliana Reyes
- Evelyn Kamsin
- Girls in Action
- Gregory Yang, Theater Mu
- Hillary Lor
- Hmong American Partnership
- Joy Spika
- Juliette Myers
- Kabo Yang
- Karenni Saint Paul Dancers
- Katie Bradley, Theater Mu
- Lady Midnight (Adriana Rimpel)
- Mary Jo Avendaño
- Minnesota Council of Nonprofits - AmeriCorps VISTA
- National Association of Social Workers MN Chapter
- Oromo Community of Minnesota
- Padee Yang
- Pao Her
- Potbelly
- Russ Turner, The People Incorporated Training Institute
- Safi Khalif, YIELD
- Sarah Kamsin
- Sumo Egg Rolls
- University of Minnesota
- Violence Free Minnesota
- Washburn High School
- Washington Technology Magnet School
- Willie Pinckney, Woodbury Fire
- Youn Intervention Programs Association (YIPA)

2019 Volunteers, Mentors, and Interns

Thank you to the following individuals who have volunteered their time and effort in support of WISE and our girls’ programs:

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- Haddy Maki
- Inika Raikar
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- Jena McDermott
- Jessica Saltz
- Jina Rahimi
- Kassandra Raasch
- Katrina Lee
- Kyla Helsel
- Lilliana Kay
- Mai Mong Lao
- Michaela Corniea
- Nasteho Yusuf
- Nina Cecere
- Pachia Thao
- San Aye
- Selamawit Tilahun
- Sophia Lamor
- Thi Bui
- Vanessa Pesantez
- Youa Lor