

# College Access Now

\$100,000 in 2009

20 for 20  
stories years



College Access Now (CAN) was founded in 2005 to address the substantial gap in college access between low-income students and their more affluent peers.

When CAN applied for a Pooled Fund Grant Award in 2009, they worked in two Seattle Public High Schools to provide college access curriculum and intensive

individual support to 120 juniors and seniors from low-income families who would be

the first generation in their families to attend college. Their track record was impressive - **100% of CAN's graduates were offered admission to college.**

The \$100,000 grant from WWF allowed CAN to successfully launch its first large-scale expansion to West Seattle High School. CAN's Executive Director Dr. Sheri Ranis says, "**This allowed us to see how CAN's core**

**program could be replicated and set us on a trajectory to serve more students.**" Today, CAN serves over 1,600 students at seven Seattle area high schools, and they will expand again to four more high schools in two additional school districts in Fall 2016.

Sheri says, "**We see the WWF grant as the launch pad not only for our expansion, but also for several other significant multi-year investments** that came to us in subsequent years from funders like College Spark Washington and Social Venture Partners Seattle (SVP)."



## Linda Hendrickson WWF member since 2010, Chair of CAN Board

After Linda retired, she wanted to re-engage in efforts to make positive community change. Of WWF, she says, "**I knew immediately that I wanted to be associated with this group of smart, passionate women putting their heads, hearts and money together to address some of our most difficult societal issues.**" Linda's participation on several grant committees and site visits allowed her to turn her passion into action; she says, "The work and the women doing it are truly inspiring!"

After serving on the committee at SVP that awarded CAN a capacity-building grant in 2011 and learning that CAN had received a WWF Pooled Fund Grant Award in 2009, Linda knew first-hand how thoroughly the organization had been vetted. "I joined the CAN board in 2011," Linda says, "and am now board chair. **I'm grateful for WWF's early support—it was critical to getting us to where we are today!**"

## Betsy Herring WWF member since 2015, CAN Board Member

Betsy has volunteered as a college coach for CAN at Franklin High School since 2010, and she joined their Board of Directors in 2014. Betsy's first introduction to WWF came through an invitation to attend the Philanthropy Celebration in 2015 - she joined soon after.

In 2016, Betsy participated on the Pooled Fund Grant Committee. Of her experience, she says, "**Working with the women in my group was inspiring and challenged me to expand my philanthropic thinking.** WWF has educated me about the needs in our community and how women working together can make a difference."



## Donna Lou WWF member since 2005, WWF Board Member, CAN Board Member

Donna was encouraged to get involved with both WWF and CAN in 2005. A year later, when she sat on the Pooled Fund Grant Committee for the first time, Donna read CAN's Letter of Inquiry and was impressed with the organization's mission.

Donna joined CAN's Board of Directors in 2007 as the program was expanding for the first time to Franklin High School. Donna says, "**I recall encouraging CAN to reapply for a Pooled Fund Grant, knowing that their program would resonate with many WWF members who understand how complicated and competitive the college application process had become.** I was ecstatic when CAN was awarded the grant in 2009!"

Donna's work with CAN cultivated her interest and commitment to social justice, and Donna was delighted to parlay her passion to WWF to serve as the board liaison for the Diversity Partner Grant Committee. She says, "**I have really enjoyed getting to know the members who work on these committees as well as hearing about smaller, not-for-profit organizations that service specific ethnic, diverse communities in and around greater Seattle.**"