

Seattle Arts & Lectures

\$60,000 in 2007

20^{for}20
stories years



In 2006, Seattle Arts & Lectures (SAL) sought a WWF Pooled Fund Grant in order to sustainably grow their *Writers In The Schools* (WITS) program. This weekly in-school creative writing and performance program had already expanded from two to 21 schools in 12 years, and more schools were requesting to participate.

However, when the Great Recession hit in 2008, several schools that experienced drastic state budget cuts could no longer afford to continue participating in WITS. With this unexpected setback, **WWF's three-year funding commitment allowed the SAL team flexibility to find ways to continue their partnerships and to pilot creative new ways to provide WITS to more K-12 students.** One such creative idea was a "remote residency" with a Port Townsend public school, and another was serving pediatric patients in Seattle Children's Hospital's Palliative Care Unit. Both of these pilots proved successful and continue to this day. **WITS had fully rebounded by 2010, and today, it serves more than 6,500 students annually at 25 public schools through writer residencies and author visits.**

Ruth Dickey, SAL's Executive Director, says "WWF's grant to WITS was critical to recover from the economic challenges of those years. **You helped ensure that WITS not only continued during the economic downturn, but that it would go on to thrive, inspiring and empowering thousands of students and hundreds of teachers in our region.**"



Peggy Hanel WWF member since 2003, Former SAL Board Member

When Peggy heard co-founder Colleen Willoughby describe WWF's mission and vision back in 2003, she says, "I joined that very day!" In the years since, Peggy experienced the effects of the work described by Colleen. She says, "My own philanthropy has been enriched by my work on the grant committee, I enjoy life-long friendships made through WWF, and **I delight in the ways we've strengthened our community through well-considered, collective giving.**"

As a SAL board member, Peggy witnessed the impact a grant from WWF can make. She says, "When I see an elementary school student take the stage at a sold-out author talk at Benaroya Hall and proudly read a poem he wrote, I love knowing WWF was a part of that. **Our grant also told SAL that our nearly 500 members believe in their mission and value their work. This affirmation is the best gift of all.**"

Margit Rankin WWF member since 2009, Former ED of SAL

While Executive Director of SAL from 2003-2007, Margit was invited to serve on the inaugural WWF Impact Assessment Committee in 2003. Margit says, "**I was impressed that a granting organization was so wise and open to solicit input and participation from Executive Directors in evaluating their grants.**" Margit enjoyed it so much that she was hooked. She says, "When I left SAL, I knew I wanted to stay involved, and so I became a member."

Margit went on to participate on the Grant Committee and to chair the Discovery Days Planning Committee. She says, "I truly appreciate that WWF provides so many different meaningful ways to understand the challenges and needs, and the opportunities for strengthening, our community. My continued participation in WWF has been one of the most important means of feeling connected. **It has strengthened me as a leader and as a volunteer, and I value the education, engagement and leadership of smart, informed women that WWF offers.** I know that my contribution is leveraged far beyond anything I could accomplish on my own, and that feels great."

Kim Brown Seely WWF member since 2009, SAL Advisory Board Member

Kim was first introduced to WWF while serving on SAL's board. She says, "For several years we'd made it to the final rounds of the Pooled Fund Grant process. I was so impressed by the women who made our site visit each year that when we were awarded our grant in 2007, I couldn't wait to join WWF myself."

In her professional career as an editor and travel writer, Kim has always been inspired by the power of the written word to inspire change. She says, "**But my WWF friends are a force of nature. It's been energizing and empowering being part of big change through the power of collective giving.**"