



# ALUMNI IMPACT UWC THE NETHERLANDS 2017 EDITION



## UWC WORLDWIDE



**17** COLLEGES



**150** NATIONAL COMMITTEES



**150** NATIONALITIES



**3,000** VOLUNTEERS



**70%** SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT



**60,000** ALUMNI



**2,518** NATIONAL COMMITTEE  
SELECTED INTERNATIONAL BOARDING  
STUDENTS



AVERAGE IB SCORE 34.9 OUT OF 45 (WORLDWIDE 29.9)  
250+ SERVICE HOURS PER STUDENT



## UWC THE NETHERLANDS



**120** VOLUNTEERS



**700** ALUMNI



**42** CURRENT STUDENTS  
(21 FIRST YEARS, 21 SECOND YEARS)



**46%** OF ALUMNI  
CONTRIBUTE FINANCIALLY



**35-40%**  
PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION

# EDUCATING FOR PEACE AND IMPACT

In today's turbulent world Educating for peace and impact is more urgent than ever. For over 50 years United World Colleges (UWC) has been contributing to intercultural understanding, tolerance, sustainability and cooperation through excellent International Baccalaureate education in an international context. The UWC xperience organises short programmes in and around Dutch schools and several summer vacation programmes. UWC selects its students with 150 nationalities based on their ambition, potential and commitment, and helps them develop into future leaders: social, resourceful, creative and passionate. Our 60,000 alumni worldwide contribute every day to a more peaceful and sustainable world.

In The Netherlands we enter into partnerships with individuals, foundations, corporates, governments and alumni to give as many students in The Netherlands as possible the opportunity to take ownership of the UWC mission: *UWC makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future*. We create partnerships in co-creation and always based on mutual values.

## UWC in a nutshell

- Educating for peace and impact since 1962.
- In 2017, 17 schools worldwide, in The Netherlands in the Euregion Maastricht.
- In each school around 100 different nationalities; living and learning together on campus with 200 students.
- Focus on peace and sustainability; within that UWC Maastricht focuses on social entrepreneurship.
- Two year International Baccalaureate education (5&6 vwo) with top IB scores (34.9 out of 45; worldwide IB 29.9).
- Top universities recruit students at our schools and colleges.
- Strong combination of excellent education and selection on ambition, potential and commitment.
- Each student is involved in 250 hours of social projects and activities per two years; the majority student-initiated and student-organised (IB requirement 50 hours per two years).
- UWC xperience: short programmes in and around Dutch schools and several one-week UWC summer xperiences.
- Cultural and socio-economic diversity facilitated by the UWC scholarship programme. Parents/carers contribute according to their means
- Worldwide network of 60.000 alumni (700+ in The Netherlands) and 3.000 national committee volunteers.

# DUTCH UWC ALUMNI IMPACT

Over 700 Dutch UWC alumni generate an impact in The Netherlands and abroad, contributing to a more peaceful and sustainable world every day. They work as doctors, teachers, engineers, community organisers, politicians, ambassadors, journalists, activists, psychologists and lawyers, they take care of their families, friends and neighbours and, each in their own way, give back to society what UWC has given to them. After their UWC experience our alumni fan out into the world, infused with the UWC ideals that they continue to carry with them.

In this first Dutch UWC Alumni Impact Booklet we shed some light on what our alumni are up to. What role does UWC continue to play in their lives and how has UWC influenced the steps they have taken after graduating from UWC? The tremendous impact of a UWC education lasts a lifetime and these testimonies of seven Dutch alumni are living proof of that.

“My UWC experience can be compared to a bike, a vehicle that continues to take me to places I didn’t know existed, that enables me to foster my friendships across the globe and that remains to infuse me with the motivation and tools to contribute to a more peaceful and sustainable society.” – Anne-Margreet Sas, '08-'10.



**Floyd Krom**  
(UWC Costa Rica '14-'16)  
*Day care volunteer in Ecuador*



**Isabelle Langerak**  
(UWC Mostar '08-'10)  
*Communications Coordinator at  
Afghanaid*



**Ellen Gorris**  
(UWC Mahindra '05-'07)  
*Policy Officer at European Commission*



**Stephanie van Drunen Littel**  
(UWCSEA '97-'02)  
*Strategic Development Manager at  
PostNL Current Job*



**Santje Geuze**  
(UWC Adriatic '96-'98)  
*Project Manager at VluchtelingenWerk*



**Corinne Ellemeet**  
(UWC Adriatic '93-'95)  
*Member of Parliament for GroenLinks*



**Petra van Boetzelaer**  
(UWCSEA '76-'82)  
*Founder of Stoer Ede*



## FLOYD KROM UWC COSTA RICA '14-'16

*"The UWC education has changed me from an idealistic to a practical idealist."*

"Before graduating from UWC Costa Rica, I had an accident during a soccer game that brought me back home to recover for a few months. The consequences that came with the accident made me unable to take all my IB exams in the May session of 2016. I graduated from UWC Costa Rica without having obtained my IB diploma and therefore had to take the remaining two subjects in the November session in The Netherlands.

Settling in back at home after UWC is something I found very difficult. Yet, I believe that the two years at UWC Costa Rica prepared me more than ever to face the challenges that came with the accident and to keep a positive mind-set towards my recovery and the different path that I had to take. It also gave me time to reflect on this true life changing experience. It allowed me to set new goals for the future with the UWC experience and knowledge taken from it. I wanted to expand my experience by volunteering in Ecuador in order to give something back from what I have learnt throughout my life both outside and during my time at UWC.

Being a volunteer at Villa Ticca in Ecuador, a day care centre in one of the poorest areas in Quito, has given me this opportunity. The children who come to Villa Ticca value their time at the day care centre so much, as they otherwise would have to beg on streets or work for their parents. I am therefore grateful that I can offer them sports classes in which they learn to collaborate, create self-confidence and are able to keep their mind off their worries.

This coming August I will start my bachelor's at Macalester College in Minnesota. I am still uncertain of what my future holds after university as I'm not sure what exactly I would like to pursue. Yet, in 10 years' time I hope to see myself travel the world in the effort to provide a platform for people with aspirations but no means or the opportunity to fulfil their dreams. I believe that the UWC experience makes you more realistic towards the changes you would like to achieve in this world, as well as becoming aware of the importance of small changes that could have a big impact. I can promise all new students that at the time you arrive back home after graduating from one of the United World Colleges, you will tell everyone you meet, you had one of the most unique and valuable experiences you have had in life thus far."



### UWC: a journey of growth

"A journey of growth  
"At the start of my UWC experience, I would carry around a notebook to write down all the words in English that I did not know. At the end of every day, I would sit down with my dictionary and translate all the words from English to Dutch. In my second year, my roommates and I decided to give away everything we wouldn't necessarily need any more. During this big clean up I found the notebook that I carried around during the first weeks of my first year. I told my roommate to catch my notebook and we both couldn't stop laughing for minutes. This made me realise how much I had grown during my two years at UWC Costa Rica."



## ISABELLE LANGERAK

UWC MOSTAR '08-'10

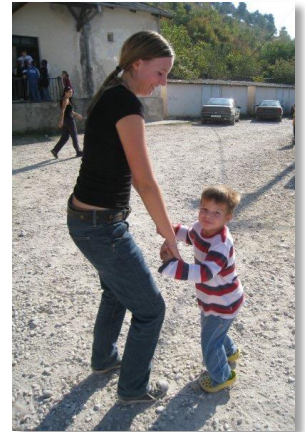


### UWC: a shaper and inspirator

“Living in Mostar and learning more about the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina has made me interested in (post-)conflict areas and has been highly influential in career choices I have made. My UWC experience has made me an internationally minded person. I came to realise how interconnected the world is and I can never again think of countries in an abstract and disconnected way. Not only has the news become much more personal, I can never look at myself as just a Dutch citizen – I am so much more than that! **UWC has also installed in me the urge to help others and the desire to help make the world a better place, through small everyday actions but also through my career in international politics and development.** UWC really challenges me to be the best person I can be but to also look around myself and help others reach their potential. “

“After graduating I took a gap year, as my CAS service in a refugee camp in Bosnia-Herzegovina inspired me to focus on volunteering for a longer period of time. I spent 6 months in Baku (Azerbaijan) to work in a youth centre and work with IDP’s (Internally Displaced Persons). After my gap year I completed a BA in Social Sciences at Durham University in the UK, which was followed by an MA in International Security at Sciences Po. During my undergraduate and graduate studies I have been actively participating in extra-curricular activities. I helped run a food coop, was a member of the Amnesty International Student Society, and was captain of the female football (soccer) team of my college. I also spent a summer teaching English in Jordan with my university’s charities committee. During my time at university I also have been able to do two amazing internships. The first was at the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies in Tbilisi, where I could pursue my interest in the South Caucasus region researching the politics and security environment of the region. The second was at the Multilateral Organisations and Human Rights Department of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I helped organising the participation of the Dutch delegation to the Sustainable Development Goals Summit and the 70<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly Summit. I got the incredible opportunity to accompany the delegation to New York and experience a major international summit first hand.

Following graduate school I was keen to work on development in a (post)conflict society and took up a job as Communications Coordinator at Afghanaid, a British NGO headquartered in Kabul and working in different provinces across Afghanistan alongside Afghans providing the skills, training, and tools Afghans need to help themselves, their families, and their communities. This has been an incredibly rewarding and interesting experience so far.”



“The main way in which I currently contribute to a better world is through my work for Afghanaid. Afghanaid has worked with Afghans since 1983, so it has strong and deep roots across the country and helps people and communities stand on their own feet. This is essential, because even if the insurgency is ever controlled, the country will not be stable unless sustainable development takes place. For me it is important and rewarding to be part of that effort, however challenging it may be.”



## ELLEN GORRIS UWC MAHINDRA '05-'07

"I feel that the choices that i have made (with studying, with work experiences are definitely inspired by UWC."

### UWC: indelible memories

"In India there is a lot of human suffering that hurts on daily basis and definitely makes you angry towards the divide between poor and rich. For me it really cumulated in this one particular incident which happened at one of the orphanages that we volunteered at every week. We were told one of the girls was in hospital for surgery but she would soon arrive. An hour later we started hearing somebody crying so loud it literally went through all of our bodies. The girl had had a surgery on her leg, with metal circles all over with pins into her leg and she was screaming. Half of the wounds were already infected. Together with a friend we carried her upstairs (she fainted a couple of times and threw up for the next hours). It was heart wrecking, the damage that the obvious the lack of medical services did on her body, it was devastating and really moved me. I guess that the combination of these type of experiences combined with an interesting curriculum and academically challenging environment really made me decide to focus on human rights and law, as I believe that they are powerful tools of change. "



"My interest in human rights, issues of social justice, and having the law as a governing framework and combining this with accountability for implementation definitely started in UWC and particularly in the volunteer work we used to do. Working in different orphanages, discussing world affairs (which frequently meant discussing ongoing conflicts), and being part of an excellent academic curriculum, made me feel extremely privileged for being given this opportunity and therefore in turn really motivated to try to turn this "investment" in me into something positive.

After graduating from UWC in India, I went to Maastricht University to study European and Dutch law (2007-2010). UWC taught me perseverance (with at times a lot of courses, a lot of volunteer work, and a little less sleep), and I knew that once I would have the bachelor's degree in law (and survived the less interesting courses such as contract law and company law), the master's degrees would be more interesting, and it really was like this.

After my bachelor's degree I decided to get some work experience before starting a master's degree. I interned with Human Rights Watch in Amsterdam and in their headquarter office in New York. After this experience I knew for sure that I wanted to focus on human rights, so I enrolled into the Public International Law master's at the University of Amsterdam (2011-2012), and went on to join the European Master's Degree (E.Ma) in Human Rights and Democratization at the European Inter-University Centre in Venice (EIUC - 2012-2013). This programme is taught the first semester on the Lido island in Venice in an old monastery (where they filmed James Bond's Moonraker!) and the second semester at one of the 41 partner-universities. I spent the second semester at the Central European University in Budapest, which was really academically and socially one of the best experiences I had ever had, and in light of current events, I am particularly grateful to have experienced.

Since then I have been living in Brussels, starting with a traineeship at the International Commission of Jurists, and since October 2014 I have been working at the European Commission. I was hired during the so-called Blue Book traineeship. I have been working as a policy officer at the Commission's Justice department, in the rights of the child team. The focus lies with violence against children and recently particularly the protection of children in migration. Since June 2017, I have been working as a Gender and Age expert at the humanitarian affairs department of the European Commission.

Throughout my studies and relatively short career I have very much focused on women's rights and prevention and responding to sexual violence in conflict, which I believe is driven from my experiences in India, where sexual abuse (especially of children) and rampant gender equality were quite visible."

## STEPHANIE VAN DRUNEN LITTEL UWC SOUTH EAST ASIA '97-'02

*"UWC has made me a conscious and responsible world citizen: through academics and community service it has given me a broad perspective on the world and challenged me to dare to do things out of my comfort zone."*

"After UWC I moved to the Netherlands to study Psychology. Initially intended as a 'gap year' before moving to other adventures, I loved Groningen so much that I stayed, creating a base in The Netherlands. After five years at university I landed an internship at the UN Refugee Agency in Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya – through the UWC network. Following that I started my career at TNT Post in the Netherlands: TNT had strong values with regard to Social Responsibility and offered a general management traineeship. Next to my job I have always done volunteer work, as a mentor for youths in Amsterdam, making a business plan for Fairwork International, working for World Food Programme in Malawi. I am committed to contributing to the world around me and being conscious and feeling responsible and putting words into action is at the core of that.

In the next 5 to 10 years I expect to leave the corporate sector and return to doing something that has a positive impact on people's lives. I expect that we will live in a more international environment taking the road less travelled."

### UWC: an exploration

"Last year my partner and I took a sabbatical from work and drove from Amsterdam to Beijing and back in a Landcruiser. UWC taught me the world is large and there for exploring, that there are more similarities between people than differences. Our trip offered us an insight into the effects of USSR on Central Asia, on the link between East and West which has existed for thousands of years through the Silk Road. It gave us a broader perspective on politics and international relations."



"The most important thing UWC offered me is the knowledge that you are responsible for yourself and that anything is possible if you set out to do it. The values UWC has about learning from other cultures is one thing but putting it into action is what I learned at UWC. 15 years ago I worked at the Communal Disease Center with HIV/AIDS patients in Singapore. At the time these patients were stigmatized and shunned out of the Singapore community. I was confronted with complexity in politics and social rules with regard to the patients and the Center. Yet UWC taught me to go beyond that and that simple human kindness and contact is what is important. This belief enabled us to meet people and be invited to their homes during our trip making it a very personable experience."



## SANTJE GEUZE UWC ADRIATIC '96-'98

"After graduating from UWCAD in 1998 I took a third year option (found by the support of my wonderful English teacher at the college). I was 4 years old when I told my parents I wanted to go to Africa before I was twenty and I did: I volunteered for SOS children's villages Ghana. Although I am quite critical about voluntary work, especially in the so-called orphanages, I am still grateful for this experience. Being exposed to the vibrant Ghanaian culture and volunteering in the kindergarten of the SOS Children's villages was a stepping stone to so much more. Above all, it was my first Africa experience, a love story that has ever since continued. After this gap year, I studied Psychology (Msc) and directly after that I enrolled in a Masters in International Humanitarian Action. Next to my interest in refugees I have always had a fascination for women's rights. In light of this I wrote my thesis about the vulnerability of Burundi refugee women to gender based violence in the refugee camps in north western Tanzania. After coming back it was difficult to find a job, so I worked for a bank and became a volunteer for the Dutch Council for Refugees (DCR). This volunteering opportunity led to many of my subsequent jobs, such as my secondment by DCR to the Refugee Consortium of Kenya. When working for a local partner organization, I realised I missed knowledge in the area of structural development cooperation and thus I enrolled in an Advanced Masters in Development Cooperation while doing a work placement for a small NGO called 'Maatwerk bij Terugkeer', an organization working on return migration of rejected asylum seekers and undocumented migrants. Since then, I worked as a programme advisor in Liberia (2015) and now I am back in The Netherlands working with the target group that is close to my heart: refugees. I am back with the DRC as a project manager for a project focusing on the empowerment of refugee children and director of a beautiful small foundation called Beyond Borders. BB advocates for a better future perspective for (ex)unaccompanied minors in The Netherlands.

I believe that UWC has influenced the choices I made in my life and highly influenced my wish to work with vulnerable groups and in particular refugees/asylum seekers."



### UWC: friendships with impact

"I grew up in a small city in the South of The Netherlands, went to a gymnasium where we had only one foreigner (adopted Chinese) and I lived in a very white environment. UWC gave me the opportunity to get to know people from all over the world and broaden my views. One of my dear friends at the college was a Burundian refugee who fled Burundi when his family's house got attacked by "the enemy" and his parents got killed. He fled and received prima facie refugee status in a refugee camp (in Tanzania). This was my first encounter with a refugee and when our friendship evolved and he confided trust in me by sharing his story, this made an indelible impression on me. Since then, one of the biggest compliments that I have ever received is that the African partner organizations I worked with indicated that I understood the true meaning of partnership. That it is not only the donor who decides for the African partners what to do, but to step in their shoes and place myself in their context. I believe my UWC experience - and in particular the friendships I made - has certainly played a role in me being able to do so!"

## CORINNE ELLEMEET UWC ADRIATIC '93-'95

*"UWC has been the most intense and uplifting educational experience of my life. It has influenced me greatly, both socially and academically. I would not be the same – in terms of ambition, involvement, hunger for inspiration, faith in positive change – without UWC. "*



"After graduating from UWCAD in 1995 I returned to The Netherlands and studied history at the University of Amsterdam. I completed my graduate diploma in American Studies at Smith College (MA, USA) and worked as a civil servant for ten years. First as a policy advisor at the Ministry of Health, later on in Amsterdam as deputy director of an economic city council programme. I took up business studies at the University of Amsterdam in 2010, and after completing my pre-masters programme I joined the Westergasfabriek, a creative entrepreneurial site in Amsterdam, as deputy director. In 2014 I joined the provincial nature and climate federations as director. This March I have been installed as member of parliament for GroenLinks, GreenLeft.

As a member of parliament for the GreenLeft party I try to steer the decisions made by our government into the right, green direction: I believe in respect for every citizen and equal chances for all, regardless of your background and religion. I also strongly believe it is my generation that needs to bring about the energy transition and to stop climate change. In my day to day work as a parliamentarian I am committed to an affordable and good health care system, and to a rich and diverse cultural climate."

### UWC: learning with and from one another

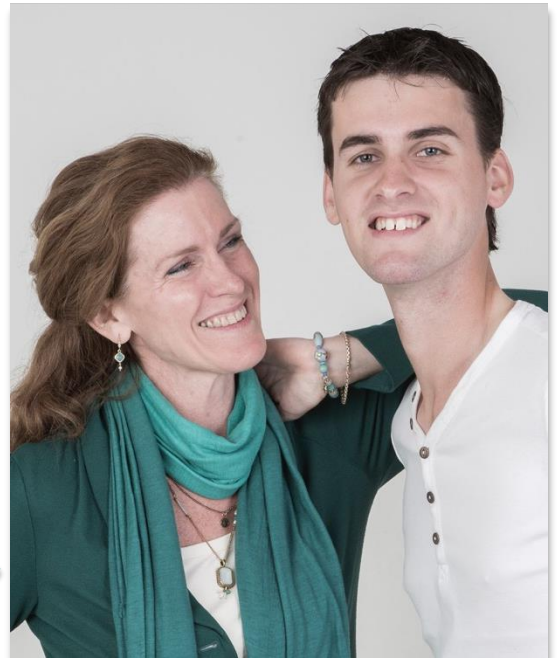
"Some of my best memories regard my co-students. Their eagerness to learn, debate, express their opinions – I have learned so much from them, for example in my philosophy class. I will never forget the interaction between our teacher, Paul Stachowiak, and us students, the way we all tried to read and understand Nietzsche – these 16 or 17 year old kids interpreting The Morality of Evil. Or the way in which we prepared for a theater play, completely devoted. Everyone was so positively committed. Another intense memory regards the weekend trips we would make to Slovenia and Croatia, where we entertained young kids in refugee camps. I will never forget the interaction with those children, where it didn't matter that we didn't speak the same language. We were just grateful to offer some fun relief to them."

## PETRA VAN BOETZELAER

### UWC OF SOUTH EAST ASIA '76-'82

UWC:  
embracing the unknown

"Has being at a UWC taught me this? No, but UWC has taught me to look further, to not only accept what is within reach but to reach just a little further. And of course my internal Tiger Mom has contributed too. And every now and again, I think about the lady with MS, in that home in Singapore. And I am grateful that she, and that home, were my first experience with disabled people. That they were happy people too."



"I was born and raised in Singapore, eldest daughter of Dutch parents who met and married in Singapore. UWCSEA was the logical secondary school to go to. So to me, I thought it was 'just' school and nothing special. I started at UWCSEA in 1976 and left in 1982, one year before my actual graduation.

Whilst at UWC, I chose to help at the home for the handicapped people. In Singapore at that time (1970's) they were hidden away in homes. A young woman with MS was lying in her bed and next to her, a young woman with mental retardation was being restrained as she was violently angry. What at, I couldn't understand: she only made sounds, didn't speak. The conversations I had with the lady with MS were surprising, yet it took me a while to see the person behind the severely crippled body. I had never seen people with disabilities before and here were so many of them! After a while, I got used to them and to the fact that these people at this home really needed our help.

Years later, when I was pregnant, I hoped my children would be healthy and they were. My eldest son Robert, however, suffered a brain haemorrhage just before his 3rd birthday, which severely damaged his brain. So, there I was, with my own son with special needs. It woke up the Tiger Mom in me. There was a whole new world opening up to me, a world in which I had to find my way. The neurologist insisted that such a young child should be given the benefit of the doubt when we asked if Robert would be able to have some quality of life. Which he did, with all his good and not so good things in life.

Robert is 22 years old now and I am so proud of him. In his world, he is a police officer, a soccer coach and a DJ. He must have realized at some point that these were the jobs with status. For his occupational therapy, which we prefer to call work, he is a teachers' assistant. He joins in on classes of young people studying to be social workers, teachers, or other professions in 'health and care' and the students learn how to work with people with disabilities in the safety of their own classroom, before traineeships.

I am currently working on setting up a home for my son and seven others, together with their parents. A home near ours, where we as parents decide on, well, on everything. A home with the values we believe in, by which we have raised our children: love and understanding. In this home, our children will be local residents like all others and not 'that group of special people'. The home is called Stoer, the residents (and their parents!) are Stoer, which means "totally cool". Building will start in 2018 and the house will hopefully open in 2019. We're busy planning the layout of the home, on who is coming to work there to take care of our children and how much it will cost. Because we know what our children need, not only in care but more specifically in life. Not just medical care, but attention, personal care, friendship, and trust they need and deserve."



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