

# GIRLS' LEAD FOR PEACE

**"THERE IS MORE IN US THAN WE KNOW IF WE COULD BE MADE TO SEE IT; FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES WE WILL BE UNWILLING TO SETTLE FOR LESS."  
- KURT HAHN, FOUNDER OF UWC**

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:**

Girls' Lead For Peace (GLP) is a pilot program designed to connect high school female students from Iraq to college female students in the United States. The program is inspired by WorldLearning's The Experimental Digital (TED) program that connects hundreds of young people across the United States with peers in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. GLP is designed to minimize the opportunity gap experienced by young women in Iraq that is caused by unequal access to work study opportunities, being part of a team as opposed to their male friends, brothers and colleagues. GLP aims to provide a safe space for young women to talk about their career goals, dreams and academic achievements while encouraging them to raise their voice about issues in their communities. This pilot program aims to give this safe space to 20 participants that are each assigned to a program facilitator (read bios below) along with 3 other students. This fully funded 5-week summer virtual experience will help female students make more connections, establish relationships abroad with their American mentors, and learn more about themselves through the process.



Hello!

My name is Aya Al-Shakarchi and I am an Iraqi student at Concordia College in the United States. I am pursuing a degree in Political Science and Multimedia Journalism and would like to go to be a lawyer in the future. I was born and raised in Karada, Baghdad and went to Baghdad College High School for Girls. In 2016, I was one of the first students that graduated from Digital Young Leaders Exchange Program (DYLEP), a cultural exchange program that connects students from the Middle East and the United States and currently known as The Experimental Digital (TED). Then I got accepted to United World Colleges (UWC) in Germany, which led me to earn my high school diploma in 2019.

I have been awarded the Davis Projects For Peace grant that would allow me to coordinate Girls' Lead For Peace, a program that connects young women from Iraq (aged 13-18) to American female students in college. I am very passionate about mentoring, connecting with people and building bridges between different countries. Having lived in 3 countries myself and experienced different styles of education, I believe that everyone should have an equal opportunity to learn about education in different countries that would help further young people's aspirations of becoming whatever they want.

From the Girls' Lead For Peace program this summer, I hope to establish long-lasting mentor-mentee relationships this summer that will guide young women to discover their academic and career goals just like I did when participating in DYLEP in 2016. The program has also helped unlock my love for reading, running, baking vegan recipes and enjoying making connections with people across cultures.

**Program duration  
June 27 - July 31**

**GIRLS' LEAD  
FOR PEACE**



Summer 2021

## **Program coordinator**

# MEET OUR TEAM

## **Maggie Pfeffer**

My name is Maggie Pfeffer, and I am from Alexandria, Minnesota. I double majored in English Writing and Global Studies and triple minored in Interfaith Studies, Religion, and Business. Education has been a part of my life since I was a little girl -- my parents always encouraged us to ask questions and be curious -- becoming educated has always been a part of who I am. I am interested in so many different areas of study and each major and minor has its own little story of why I chose it in particular. In 5 years, my main goal is to be happy, I hope to be writing poetry that I love and making a positive mark on our world. This summer as a "mentor" for Girls Lead For Peace it is my hope that I can be a learner, an encourager a supporter and a friend. If I could know every single person in this world... I would, I feel so lucky to be a part of this.



## **Elizabeth Yoder**

My name is Elizabeth Yoder and I am from Dickinson, North Dakota, and I went to college at Augustana in Sioux Falls, SD. I have a degree in Religion, Government, and Classics. My professors have encouraged me to follow my curiosity and that was what led me to my majors. I am interested in learning more about what motivates people, and why people do what they do. I am going to law school this Fall and In 5 years, I hope to either be pursuing a Masters or PhD The greatest lessons I have learned from my professors is the importance of collaborative learning. I hope that I can mirror this experience while being a mentor in Girls' Lead For Peace.



## **Karin Selland**

My name is Karin Selland and I am originally from Rugby, North Dakota. I just graduated from Concordia College with a degree in Global Studies. Education has made my world so much bigger, especially with the major that I chose to study. I am still discerning what career I hope to have in five years, but I hope I am able to help others in some capacity. I cannot wait to meet each of my mentees, as there is something to learn from everyone!

## **Elly Schaefer**

“ My name is Elly Schaefer and I am from Moorhead, Minnesota. I graduated from Concordia College with degrees in Global Studies and Mathematics. I have always been passionate about learning about the world around me, which led me to study Global Studies. I enjoyed learning more about global issues and different cultures, as well as connecting with new friends from different backgrounds. My education has allowed me to follow these different interests and passions of mine, even when they are not related to each other. Through education, I have developed new skills, become a better problem solver, and had opportunities to travel around the world. I am passionate about the power of education and cross-cultural connections which makes me very excited to be a mentor in the Girls Lead for Peace project. I am looking forward to learning more about my students while sharing with them about the power of education.



## **Danika Vukovich**

My name is Danika. I live in Woodbury, Minnesota, and I'm studying Theatre at Concordia College. Education has helped me become empowered; it has shown me different passions that I can pursue. Because I'm studying Theatre, I hope to be involved with theatre as a job after college. I love history and theatre, so I hope to be a Dramaturg (a theatre historian). I also love writing (I'm writing a book!) so I see myself publishing in the next five years! I love mentoring and helping others. I can provide support and guidance on anything you need, whether that be career, school, or life.



# Why participate in GLP?

1. To establish connections with mentors studying in university or have graduated.
2. To deepen cultural understanding and get an overview of college lifestyles in the US.
3. To have access to a safe space to talk about dreams, future plans, and education goals. Ellie, Karen, Elizabeth, Maggie, Danika and I will provide this space weekly and provide you with the learning material you need to complete the program.
4. To make new friends and peers after the school year ends and do something productive this summer break!
5. To have a space to practise your English language and talk about your other skills and passions.
6. Participants will receive a care package upon completion of the 5-week program with program merch, a certificate and chocolate!

## Program Timeline and topic increment

### **Module 1: Womanhood and cultural identity June 27 - July 3**

In this opening week, students will meet with their mentors for the first time and talk about their experiences as women in their countries. The purpose of this intro week is to connect how our culture has affected the way we view ourselves as women and how we were impacted by it.

### **Module 2: Education Paths and Career Interests July 4 - 11**

Students will discuss their experiences with education and brainstorm current issues and struggles girls face today in Iraq during high school. In this module, students will be able to share with their mentor and small groups how societal norms has affected their education path and the struggle of not having access to extracurricular activities.

### **Module 3: Women in business, science, politics and technology July 11 - 17**

In this module, students will be introduced to female figures in these fields and disciplines and discuss their career aspirations with their mentors. Students will also present their perceptions on how these fields might look like for a woman and talk about the obstacles that might arise when working in this field as women in Iraq.

### **Module 4: Women in the Media JULY 18 - 24**

Students will discuss the portrayal of women in society, social media, and the inherited view of gender roles from older generations. Students will do exercises with their mentors where they will answer questions such as: “In my country, women are expected to.....” and present their ideas in the dialogue with their peers and mentors.

### **Module 5: Women 4 Women JULY 25 - 31**

In this closing module, students will discuss unconscious bias women have against women in Iraq, like mothers against daughters, friends against friends, ect. To address this issue, students will take everything they learned during the program and formulate their own “action idea” about what they want to change in society and how they are going to make this change possible.

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## Eligibility requirement :

1. Are you between the ages of 14-19?
2. Currently enrolled or have not completed high school
3. Reside in Iraq
4. Have conversational and basic writing English skills
5. Have regular access to the internet
6. Can devote 4 hours each week to the program

Have any questions about the program?

You can contact me via:

- Send me an email to [aalshaka@cord.edu](mailto:aalshaka@cord.edu) OR
- Message me to my Telegram username [@ayaalshaka](https://t.me/ayaalshaka) OR
- Message me via WhatsApp at 2182393162

***You can apply to the program here  
Application Deadline June 6, 2021 by  
11:59pm.***