From the Director
by Vernon D. Johnson

Welcome to the second edition of the Munro Institute Newsletter. This edition will highlight our activities over the last year and share with you our ambitious slate of programs for the 2018-19 school year. Ralph Munro has left a rich legacy both as the secretary of state of Washington and as a private citizen. One of the innovative things Ralph did as secretary of state was to lead business missions to the Far East to advance trade between that region and Washington in the period after economic reforms occurred in China. In his private life he has made trips to East Africa as part of the Seattle Rotary Club’s campaign to eradicate polio there. To honor Ralph’s contributions overseas on the occasion of his 75th birthday this year’s Munro Seminar is entitled “Ralph Munro’s Legacy in the International Affairs.” A summary of seminar events and other institute programs from last year, and those to come this year, follow. We hope to see you at some point along the way to honor the contributions of one of our state’s finest citizens.

2017-18 in Review

Munro Seminar 2017

In 2017 we continued with the two-day format featuring a keynote speaker offered in the community in the evening of the first day. The theme for the seminar was “Rebuilding Political Consensus.” Our keynote speaker was Sarah Van Gelder, acclaimed author and co-founder of YES! Magazine. She is the author of the book The Revolution Where You Live: Stories from a 12,000-Mile Journey Through a New America.

The keynote was held at the Majestic Ballroom in downtown Bellingham. Sarah gave a lively talk describing her road trip around the country to examine the ways that local citizens come together across boundaries of race, class and political ideology to rebuild local economies, sustain the environment, and resolve racial conflict. She offered an inspiring message of hope in this time when we hear so much pessimism in national level politics.

Two panels building upon the theme of rebuilding consensus were offered the next day in the Wilson Library Reading Room. The topics were “Community Stakeholders in Rebuilding Consensus,” and “The Role of Political Parties in Rebuilding Consensus.”
Political Science Association Field Trip to Olympia

In February a group of Western students joined Mr. Munro, Program Assistant Jessie Phillips and I for a visit to Olympia to meet with legislators and other state leaders. While in Olympia, the students had an opportunity to learn firsthand about state government and discuss policy issues with Lieutenant Governor Cyrus Habib, State Supreme Court Justice Debra Stephens, State Treasurer Duane Davidson, legislators, lobbyists and other state leaders and government staff.

Distinguished Alumnus Jesse Moore

The Munro Institute supported bringing 2017 distinguished alumnus, and political science graduate (06) Jesse Moore to campus in November. Mr. Moore worked for President Obama’s campaign in 2008 and went on to become a presidential speech writer. A luncheon was held on campus in his honor. He also gave two talks, one to a packed house of students at the Underground Café in the Viking Union; and another for professor Sara Singleton’s political science senior seminar on community organizing.

Civil Rights Summer

We offered the “Civil Rights Movement in the State of Washington” for a second year in August. We offered $1,000 scholarships to certified teachers and master’s in teaching students again. This year we had nine students: seven undergraduates, one MIT student, and one teacher (she was from Maryland!). We are assessing whether or not to offer it again, given the low enrollment, and amount of time and resources it takes to put together. Those who took the course did find it rewarding, however (see comments on the institute website).

PROGRAMS: 2018-19

2018 MUNRO SEMINAR FOR CIVIC EDUCATION

The theme for this year’s seminar is Ralph Munro’s Legacy in International Affairs. Our keynote speaker on October 23rd will be David Bachman, professor of political science and the Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington. Professor Bachman will talk about US-China trade relations during the Trump presidency. His lecture will be held at the Walton Room of the Mount Baker Theatre.

OCTOBER 23

David Bachman

“CHINA AND THE UNITED STATES: TRADE AND SECURITY TENSIONS IN THE ERA OF TRUMP.”

7:00PM

Harold and Irene Walton Room, Mount Baker Theatre, 104 North Commercial Street, Bellingham

OCTOBER 24

Wilson Library Reading Room, Western Washington University

2:30PM – 4:00PM

GLOBAL CITIZENS’ ACTIVISM

Moderator

Vicki Hamblin, Executive Director, Institute for Global Engagement, WWU

Panelists

Colleen Mitchell, Engineers without Borders, Bellingham Chapter

Liz Mogford, Sociology department, Western Washington University

Lauren McClanahan, Bellingham Sister Cities Association, Secondary Education department, Western Washington University
OCTOBER 24 (continued)

4:30PM – 6:00PM
TRADE POLICY UNDER THE TRUMP PRESIDENCY

Moderator
Laurie Trautman, Director, Border Policy Research Institute, Western Washington University

Panelists
Louis Mingo, Economic Affairs officer, Mexican Consulate, Seattle
Christopher Sands, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University
Jason Query, Economics department, WWU
Stan Sorscher, President, Washington Fair Trade Coalition

NOVEMBER 14
WHAT JUST HAPPENED IN THE MIDTERM ELECTIONS?

No matter what your political persuasion, the 2018 congressional elections are some of the most important in American history. The institute has invited one of our home-grown experts, political scientist Todd Donovan, and other experts from around the region for a roundtable discussion to access what has happened and what that means for America going forward.

Harold and Irene Walton Room, Mount Baker Theatre

Moderator
Vernon Johnson, Director, Munro Institute

Panelists
Melissa Santos, Seattle Times, Editorial Board
Todd Donovan, Political Science Department, Western Washington University
Christopher Parker, Political Science Department, University of Washington
Paul Quirk, Political Science Department, University of British Columbia

NEW INITIATIVES

Distinguished Alumnus in Residence

Western has numerous alumni who are making their marks in all walks of life. In collaboration with the Karen Morse Institute for Leadership, we are planning to host a Distinguished Alumnus in Residence program in spring quarter. We are talking to Jessie Moore, our alum (’05) who worked in the Obama White House and is now doing political consulting. What Mr. Moore will do precisely is still being worked out, but may involve a short course, several lectures and classroom and community appearances. This will be the pilot for what we hope will be an annual program featuring a distinguished alumnus, not only in politics, but business and other areas of civic activism.

Ralph Munro Commemorated in the 1968 Legacy Project

1968 was a tumultuous year in which many seminal events in American and world history took place. The Washington secretary of state's office has sponsored the 1968 Legacy Project memorializing important moments that year in the state of Washington. 1968: The Year That Rocked Washington is an exhibit on display at the Washington State Capitol that chronicles dramatic moments and key figures in the state during that path-breaking year. Ralph Munro is featured for his early work advocating for the rights of the disabled. It was in 1968 that Ralph confronted Governor Dan Evans at a public event where he was promoting volunteerism. He had been touched by the plight of the disabled earlier and impressed upon the governor the need to include the disabled under civil rights law. There are many twists and turns to the story, but Governor Evans eventually hired Ralph, and from that platform he became a leading figure in getting legislation passed in 1973 that applied the state's anti-discrimination law to people with “sensory, mental and physical” disabilities. You can check out Ralph’s story and those of many other prominent Washingtonians at the capitol building throughout the fall. Or you can find it online at https://www.sos.wa.gov/legacy/sixty-eight/about.aspx.
Support the Munro Institute

The Munro Institute is dedicated to providing quality presentations and events. This year your contribution can help support our internship program and scholarships for teachers for our summer civil rights class. It will also help to fund the seminar and other events we sponsor in the course of the year.

Munro Seminar for Civic Education

Yes, I/We wish to support the Munro Seminar for Civic Education with a gift of: $_________

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