



Seattle temps have been soaring this summer, but the heat didn't slow us down. We've been busy preparing to welcome 87 new students next month — our largest cohort ever! And we're leveraging our growing Comm Lead network to offer these budding communication leaders the support and connections they need to put their new skills to work.

Our [Partner Program](#) is growing and we're offering more beyond-the-classroom learning experiences with local organizations. This fall, select students will tackle specific communication challenges identified by Dog Gone Seattle (founded by alumna Jenny DB Nordin, Cohort 11), FareStart, The Henry Art Gallery, The Nereus Program, and UW CoMotion.

Read on to hear what our newest Associate Director Ekin Yasin has been up to in her first Comm Lead classes, and find out what's on our summer reading list.

Cheers,  
Molly

### Core class helps local partners define their organizational story



Associate Director Ekin Yasin's inaugural course offering pairs students with local companies to refine their organizational identity. Three partners — each with a unique storytelling challenge — partnered with the class for this purpose: Filson, a legacy outdoorsman brand that needed to capture new, younger customers; WE Worldwide, a public relations firm that wanted to expand its identity to better reflect the variety of clients they work with, and FareStart, a nonprofit that provides culinary job training for low-income populations, that struggled to sustain its growing alumni community. [Read on...](#)

### What's the secret sauce of communication? A familiar surprise



Why did we pick *Hit Makers* as the first text our 87 incoming students will read in the program? *The Atlantic's* senior editor Derek Thompson presents a powerful guide to why things (songs, social media platforms, politicians) become popular. He posits that humans are enticed by novelty, but also crave the comfort of what they already know, so a simple formula for impactful communication is to offer elements of both — a familiar surprise. [Read on...](#)

#### Good Reads

The #readings channel in our team's slack is constantly buzzing. Here's what else we're reading:

- [Thank You For Being Late](#)
- [Everybody Lies](#)
- [Leaders Eat Last](#)
- [Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation?](#)
- [8 Steps to Freelancing for the Greater Good](#)

#### What say you?

Ekin Yasin is teaching a new elective this fall, "[Communicating Ideas: Strategies and Theories of Communities and Networks](#)," and wants your recommendations.

What are you reading, listening to, or watching that relates to the topic of building online or offline communities?

[Let us know!](#)

### Upcoming Events

Guest lectures, master classes, social gatherings and more! Don't miss your chance to connect with Comm Leaders and learn something new at an upcoming event hosted by Comm Lead or one of our partners.

- First Friday: Avvo (Oct. 6). Details coming soon!
- Save-the-date for an evening featuring Derek Thompson, author of *Hit Makers*, in partnership with Town Hall Seattle (Oct. 7). Details coming soon!
- GeekWire Summit (Oct. 9 - 11). Comm Leaders get 15% off with code storyteller15. [Learn more and RSVP.](#)
- First Friday: Starbucks Headquarters (Nov. 3). Details coming soon!

Do you have an event you'd like us to promote to the Comm Lead community? [Let us know!](#)

### Alumni News

Join us in congratulating the following Comm Leaders on their recent accomplishments and new professional chapters!

- Michael Bean (Cohort 8) is now the VP of Audience Development & Partnerships at ScreenPrism, a media startup.
- Aubri Denevan (Cohort 12) is now User Researcher at Avvo.
- Katie Hall (Cohort 4) is now an Associate Account Director with Goodway Group, an organization with an entirely remote workforce.
- Stephanie Long (Cohort 16) is now the Marketing Manager at Lake Union Sea Ray.
- Kavya Parthasarathy (Cohort 14) is now a Content Strategist at Oracle.
- Rosemary Ponnekanti (Cohort 13) is now the Communications Coordinator at Tacoma's Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium & Northwest Trek.
- Shefali Sain (Cohort 14) is now an Account Supervisor at Edelman in San Francisco.

Have a professional milestone you'd like to share with the Comm Lead community? [Let us know!](#)



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