

Minnesota English Learner Education Conference

Keynote Address on Friday, October 14, 2016: Ms. Shegitu Kebede Permann

The Value of One Life

Ms. Shegitu Kebede Permann, Founder and President of Women International at the Well

The focus of this keynote is on inspiring teachers to recognize and accept the tremendous opportunities and potential available to make real and lasting differences in the lives of their students. Drawing on her own life experiences as a former refugee, award-winning social entrepreneur, author and motivational speaker, Ms. Kebede Permann shares her insights and passion about making a difference in the lives of young people.

Keynote Follow-up with Ms. Shegitu Kebede Permann

Ms. Shegitu Kebede Permann will lead a follow-up discussion to her keynote address and will answer questions. The session will focus on the crucial roles we can each play in our schools and communities to create environments of nurturing and belonging so that all of our students have the courage and support to use their talents to positively impact their own communities.



Biography of Shegitu Kebede Permann

Born in Awasa, Ethiopia, Ms. Kebede Permann was surrounded by war during her early life. Orphaned at the age of five, she moved into a missionary-led orphanage with her three brothers. However, the missionaries were forced to flee the country when violence from the civil war escalated; she lost a family for the second time. Like many young men in the region, Shegitu's oldest brother was abducted to fight. Not wanting her two younger brothers to suffer the same fate, she married at the age of sixteen to provide them with some kind of protection.



Shegitu was separated from family for a third time when she began a grueling, three-month-long journey to Kenya while pregnant. After a brief time in a Kenyan prison, Shegitu gave birth to her son in a refugee camp. Two years later, she was eligible to apply for a refugee resettlement in the United States. While her application was initially rejected, Ms. Kebede Permann appealed the decision and was granted refugee status. She and her three-year-old son flew to Fargo, North Dakota before ultimately relocating to Minneapolis.

After overcoming financial and cultural obstacles, Ms. Kebede Permann found success as an entrepreneur. She founded Going Home, Inc.—a program that provided job training for immigrant women—and Homework Center, which offered homework assistance and afterschool activities for immigrant children. Shegitu was given the Virginia McKnight Binger Award in Human Services for her work in community services. She has been featured in the Minnesota History Center “Value of one Life” exhibit and received national recognition for making a difference in the lives of young people by Bridging Refugees Youth and Children Services (BRYCS). Ms. Kebede Permann is a published author and a motivational speaker. She is founder and president of Women at the Well International, with work focused on supporting the development of a school for children in a refugee camp in Ethiopia near the border with Eritrea.

If you would like to invite Ms. Kebede Permann to speak to students or staff at your school she can be reached at: shegitukebede@gmail.com

★ Registration

Registration for MELEd 2016 will be open on **September 1st, 2016**. Links to online registration will be available on our website, Facebook, and Twitter.

If you're interested in learning more about the cost of registration this year, please check out our [registration page](#) online.



Minnesota Department of
Education

Keynote Address on Saturday, October 15, 2016:

Diane Staehr Fenner, Ph.D., Author of *Advocating for English learners* (2014)



Advocating for Diverse ELs in Minnesota: Issues and Strategies

In this session, the presenter will share her vision of advocating for ELs, highlight key advocacy issues for ELs in Minnesota, and suggest practical strategies for educators to foster equity for ELs in the state.

Follow-up Session: Honing your Advocacy and Leadership Skills to Support ELs

To successfully advocate for ELs, educators must position themselves as leaders and form alliances to create positive change. This session focuses on developing leadership skills that you can leverage to extend your sphere of influence and benefit ELs in your school, district, and the state.

Diane Staehr Fenner, Ph.D. is the president of DSF Consulting, LLC, a woman-owned small business based in the Washington, DC metro area dedicated to the achievement of ELs by providing professional development, curriculum design, research, and technical assistance. Clients include the U.S. Department of Education, TESOL International Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, New York City Schools, the Peace Corps, various state departments of education, and school districts. She serves as the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) program coordinator for TESOL. Prior to forming DSF Consulting, Dr. Staehr Fenner gained research and EL policy experience at George Washington University's Center for Excellence and Equity in Education. Her instructional background includes a decade as an ESOL teacher, dual language assessment teacher, and ESOL assessment specialist in Fairfax County Public Schools, Virginia. She writes a blog that provides practical information and strategies for teachers of ELs for the Colorin Colorado website. She is the author of *Advocating for English learners: A Guide for Educators* (Corwin, 2014). She coauthored the book *Evaluating ALL Teachers of English Learners and Students with Disabilities: Supporting Great Teaching* with Peter Kozik and Ayanna Cooper (Corwin, 2015) and the book *Preparing Effective Teachers of English Language Learners* with Natalie Kuhlman (TESOL International Association, 2012). She has a new book in the works that will be published in time for the TESOL convention in spring 2017.



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