



Engaging Community in Community-Based Philanthropy

Lessons from the Kaleidoscope Project

In the last session the panelists.....

Introduced one funder's journey of how to shift power and focus on racial equity....

- Importance of small steps
- Flexibility that was needed
- Capacity
- Relationships built on trust and authenticity



In this session.....

1. Look at the system of inequity created by philanthropy
2. Discuss how client voice is an element in disrupting that system
3. Review some of the steps taken by the John Rex Endowment to increase equity with the Kaleidoscope Project



Who we are....

Project staff

Evaluators



System of philanthropy

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vX_yPMNV4&t=69s



It is Friday afternoon.....

On a scale of 1-3, how accurately does this describe your experience as a funder or nonprofit?

1 - Always

2 - Sometimes

3 - Not at all



Stand up and line up throughout the space

Share stories about how this has or has not been your experience in the public sector



It is Friday afternoon.....

On a scale of 1-3, how often are you thinking about authentic inclusion of client voice in decision-making around programs and funding?

1 - Always

2 - Sometimes

3 - Never



What is community/client voice?

Authentic participation and decision-making by community members impacted by a change in their community, including

- Listening and honoring the perspectives and experiences of those living in the community
- Including and supporting community members in the implementation of the preferred solutions in order to do no harm
- Building leadership skills and capacity within the community, including self-advocacy
- Ensuring that processes are participatory and inclusive of community voices
- Acknowledging how power dynamics have been operating, how they are operating, and what the ideal power dynamics need to be



What it is not.....

- “Experts” implementing solutions in communities without the community’s knowledge, input, or participation
- Surveying, interviewing, and creating town hall meetings that extract information without intending to place decision-making authority in the hands of the community
- Focusing on an “individual” voice who claims to speak “FOR” the community but is not part of a collective community voice
- Charity - providing services without addressing the root causes of the need for services
- Not addressing historic barriers to inclusion and participation
- Exerting “professional authority” over community members instead of being facilitative



Exercise 1 - Two Sticky Notes

1. What are ways that you have included community/client voices in your work?
2. What are the barriers or obstacles to including client voices?



Kaleidoscope Project

The Kaleidoscope Project is a pilot project for the John Rex Endowment focused on supporting the social and emotional health of children and their families through where they live and play.

- Community-led - driven by community members each step of the way
- Racial-equity focused - children made most vulnerable by structural racism
- Capacity building - engineering growth and mindset shift that live beyond the life of the project



Beacon Ridge - Flipping philanthropy on its head

- In partnership with DHIC and the Beacon Ridge community residents.
- Creation of a community ambassador program intentionally designed to give residents a seat at the table.
- Shifting the mindset of DHIC and John Rex Endowment.
- Building capacity of the residents and DHIC to do this work beyond the project.



Learning from Beacon Ridge

What is needed:

- Time
- Trust
- Willingness to cede control
- Patience and persistence
- Going outside of our silos
- Finding the boundaries of the status quo



10 steps to building engaged community-based philanthropy

See handout



Philanthropic System

Nonprofit staff, nonprofit executives, organizations, community systems (early childhood education, homeless services, or child welfare), and funders

Community/client voice is a huge leverage point for changing this system.

The system is designed to perpetuate itself and there will be resistance to change.

- How do we as individuals change our own mindsets and actions?
- How do we influence our organizations to change?
- How do we influence community systems and funders to change?

Supporting each other is necessary as we challenge these systems



Questions?

partnersforimpact.com



Contact information

Melissa Forde: mforde@kaleidoscopewake.org

Charlene Reiss: charlene@partnersforimpact.com

Stan Holt: stan@partnersforimpact.com

