

## Millennials Rising: Nonprofit POC Leaders

September 6, 2019 at the NonProfit Center

>>Jess Sáenz: My name is Jess Sáenz. My pronouns are they, them and I will be the Emcee for the evening. I'm so happy you all are here. TSNE MissionWorks, we are happy to be co-sponsoring — here at TSNE MissionWorks are happy to be co-sponsoring and hosting an event for 2019 Fierce Urgency of Now. This time last year, I was sitting right where you are attending the first event, Valuing Our Workforce: How the Nonprofit Sector Can Support Millennials of Color, and I thought "This is a place I want to get to know." One year later, fast forward and here I am helping to wrangle this event that you are attending right now and I'm super pumped to be here for it. [APPLAUSE] I'm going to go over logistical questions here and we will hand it over to our fearless leader Elaine. We will be livestreaming this. From 5:00–7:00, it's going to be real official in this general area, as you can see we have live captioning. If you can pause for the mic, so they can catch up. As you can see I'm not doing a great job of that because I'm a fast talker. Photos will be taken, if you do not want you mug in our photo, please let me know and we will be very mindful of that. We have bathrooms that are gendered on this floor, and we have one non-gendered bathroom on the fourth floor. We have a lactation room and a parenting room on the fourth floor as well, but you need a key to it, so see me if you need that. That's it. And the captioning on the mic. So thank you so much for being here and sharing this time and space with me. I am so grateful for each and every one of you that are here and Elaine, without further ado.

>> Elaine Ng: Thank you Jess. I am super impressed by the live captioning, because I always think, is there a gremlin somewhere typing really, really fast? Welcome everyone. I think it is a real pleasure for TSNE to be one of the kickoff events for the Fierce Urgency of Now Conference and we have an amazing panel. They are all sitting in front of me. It is amazing, young leaders, not so young, maybe, but all doing kick ass work in our city. I'm going to hand it over to them shortly, but before doing that, I want to say this is a topic that is near and dear to my heart because believe it or not, in some point in time, I was also a young leader of color and it was a while ago, but you know, at that stage and let's just say it is over 10 years, I would have loved to be in a room with this many young leaders of color and I didn't have that. And for you all to be in this space and to share your stories and your journeys and your trials and your triumphs is something that is remarkable and incredible and only helps to make us all better. So thank you all for coming and being part of this and talking the lead and the leadership that is changing the face of this city and the face of our populations and the people we all care so much about, so give yourself a round of applause for that. I also want to say that, at TSNE, this past year, I have been in my position now for little over a year, and this past year, we really tried to focus in sharply and understand how TSNE supports leadership, particularly leadership of color and to one of the things that we've recently finished or one of the reports we recently finished is called "Moving Beyond the Person" and it's a learning report about our thinking around the ongoing mass retirement of the Baby Boomer Generation, so I'm in Generation X and my generation was kind of passed over because Baby Boomers are still in their jobs now, a vast majority, so you know for many folks, especially folks of color who are in the sector and all sectors there wasn't necessarily the opportunities for us to step up into leadership roles because we still had

predominantly white leaders in their 60's, 70's, 80's sitting in their jobs. So in many respects, my generation missed a lot of leadership opportunities. The great thing is now your generation has the opportunity to really take those seats and to move things forward and in our "Moving Beyond the Person" report, we really try to draw the straight line between the opportunity and the nexus point, the inflection for us as a sector in leveraging this opportunity of the retirement of predominantly white Baby Boomers to really provide a foundation and scaffolding so you can succeed in a way that didn't exist for folks in Generation X. So I'm really looking forward to the sea change. The numbers say, people don't live forever. People can't work forever, so it will be a massive sea change where our leadership in our city will dramatically look different, so please, please, please keep everything that you're doing, take time to rest, and recover and rejuvenate because it is not a sprint. This is really a race that we're engaged in, a marathon, sometimes it feels like four marathons, back-to-back, but definitely keep plugging away and keep doing what you're doing because, you know, your work gives me hope and helps me keep going, too. Without any further ado, I'm going to pass it over, because I can keep talking about this topic because I'm seriously passionate about it, but I'm going to hand it over the panel because the panel has more exciting things to share and first, I'm going to introduce Yolanda Coentro who is the President and C.E.O. of the Institute for Nonprofit Practice and I have — I am blessed to actually call Yolanda a friend, as well as a colleague, and she is one of the strongest, smartest, most successful, dedicated, and intentional women of color I had the privilege to, both know as a person, but to work with professionally. It is my great honor to have Yolanda come up here and introduce the panel and moderate for you tonight.

[APPLAUSE]

>> Yolanda Coentro: OK, love when I get started by crying, um, so feeling is mutual, Elaine, as you know. It's such an honor to have the opportunity to facilitate this panel today. I am most excited about the fact that everything I'm asking today was actually created by you and so these questions are really for the people by the people and I'm simply the one who gets to put a voice to them, so thank you for your engagement and helping us shape today's event. I was asked to kind of just tell you a little bit about myself, so first what is the Institute for Nonprofit Practice? We are actually a partner of TSNE MissionWorks and we run our classes here in this space, as well as other locations throughout New England. We're working to build a transformative movement of diverse, ready, networked, nonprofit leaders across New England and now across the country. We're launching in New York right now as we speak and we really want to see the face of leadership change and this room is particularly special for me. It feels like home. It feels like what the room should look like in a sector that serves rooms just like this every single day. It's really such an honor to be at the helm of this place that transformed my career. So as Elaine said for her, this is personal for me, too. I actually really hit a ceiling in my career, which I imagine a number of you here are kind of thinking about where do I go next? Who will help lift me up? What do I do? I was really doing well as a director, middle manager for years, for almost nine years, did a great job so no one helped me think about how to move on, because they would have loved to keep me there forever, right. I thought I had really made it. I was doing better than both of my parents combined and I was a big success in my family and I had the opportunity to meet the founder of the Institute for Nonprofit Practice one day, by chance, through a colleague of mine. He invited me to come to the Institute and I was like, great, sounds like I can go for free. My job is going to pay for it and, sure, I like to learn, so I was onboard not

really knowing what I would experience from there. What I experienced is that many of the things I was missing were provided to me there that show up in the report as gaps and also in the Building Movement Project report as gaps for young leaders, for leaders of color, women in leadership, which were I got to meet people and build a network. I got social capital. I got validation from my leadership. I saw my potential in other people like me rising and gained some hope and I found a path to leadership and within six months, I was in my first executive role and the rest is history. Our founder did what every Baby Boomer should do, which is looked for the next person to take his spot as a Jewish founder who wanted the organization to be represented by the people that it served. And he tapped me and so he carved every path for me, made every connection and laid the groundwork when no one else would have given me this job. I hadn't raised millions of dollars. Sure, I had leadership experience and knowledge, obviously, but a lot of people on those almost all-white boards, 84% if you've read the report by TSNE, would have looked me over. And he didn't. And so now INP is four times the size and we're scaling nationally and the rest is history and a lot of you are in our program or are graduates. In fact, some of our panelists, which I'm excited about, so let me move to that and tell you who they are. I'm going to introduce them briefly, but they are going to tell more about what they do and a little bit about their journey. We'll go in alphabetical order. Carolyn Chou, Executive Director of Asian American Resource Workshop. You want to come up and take your seat, and get a big round of applause. Fearless leaders in our sector. Let me make sure I can actually go in alphabetical order. Elijah Evans, I believe you're up next, Executive Director, Bikes not Bombs. Kendra Hicks, Director of Radical Philanthropy at Resist Foundation. And Shavel'le Olivier, Executive Director of Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition. [APPLAUSE] OK, so where to begin? We

had talked about — so this is what happens when people with short legs sit on tall stools. Now you know we live streamed this, which is awesome. If we can kick off and just kind of go down the row or if you feel inspired to just jump in, please do. Just tell us a little bit about yourself and what you do at your organization, but I'm particularly interested in what's your end game where you work. We're going to start with Elijah. All right.

>> Elijah Evans: All right, my name is Elijah Evans. I'm the Executive Director at Bikes Not Bombs. To tell you a little about Bikes Not Bombs, in 1984, 35 years ago, an administration, not unlike the current one, was embroiled in a lot of scandals, one was Iran Contra. That was where our government was selling weapons to Iran using funds to fund a Civil War in Nicaragua and throughout Central America, etc. And our founders were vehemently against that. They were bike mechanics, they were activists and their first act was to get on a plane and go to Nicaragua and start a bike shop. Believing that bicycles could be not only something we used as children, but addressing the most pressing issues that we face. So in creating a bike shop, it primarily served the disabled community. Those folks would probably not be able to find employment otherwise, so it really became a formula to uplift the community and put them at the center of the solution. Taking that approach in Nicaragua, our founders came to Boston and in 1990, we started doing the same programming for young people here, counteracting the violence throughout Boston and four years later in 1994 and we opened up a bike shop. Those are all the different parts of Bikes Not Bombs. We shipped over 80,000 bicycles to 14 countries over the last 35 years, which is amazing. [APPLAUSE] Thank you. We served over 4,000 young people, one of which was me starting as a 14-year-old in the Earn-A-Bike program. We reclaimed so many bicycles out of

the waste stream and encouraging people to use it as a way to uplift themselves. A little bit about me: I started Bikes Not Bombs when I was 14. Since then I have been a youth participant, a youth staff member, youth manager, director, board member, now an Executive Director. Bikes Not Bombs has really seen my growth. I have also seen the growth of Bikes Not Bombs from a small \$500,000 organization to the organization that we are today. We're a little over \$1 million. I'm excited to be here and share my story and thank you for having me.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Thank you. Thank you, Kendra, do you want to go and we'll go down the line and come back down to Carolyn.

>> Kendra Hicks: I'm on. So similarly to Elijah, Resist was started in 1967 as a response to the Vietnam War. And so our founders actually wrote The Call to Resist Illegitimate Authority in 1967 and that's where our foundation was born. The hope of our founders was to fund the resistance, to give money to real grassroots groups on the front lines of the Civil Rights movements and all of the movements that come thereafter. Resist has a very near and dear place to my heart because they are also the foundation, they were one of the first funders at Beantown Society, which is a nonprofit organization that I'm the co-founder of and it is the place that gave me the first Executive Director job, so similar trajectories. Resist is a national foundation so we fund grassroots groups all over the country in all 50 states and U.S. occupied territories. We give away close to \$700,000 every year and we are led by a grant making panel, which is made of the grantees that we fund and they make all of the decisions of where all of the funding goes. I'm the Director of Radical Philanthropy so in my role I'm tasked with doing all of the fundraising at Resist. Resist is a grassroots foundation.

We don't have an endowment. We don't have a family who gives us money. So every dollar that comes in, we have to fund raise every year to redistribute out to the people in the movement. I started as the Director of Grants for the eastern region of the country and two years ago transitioned into my new role. Um, that's all that I have. And what is my end game at Resist? What is my end game? Resist is a worker self-directed nonprofit, which means that we have a flat structure and so in my role currently, I'm a Co-Executive Director of the organization and so my hope is to be at Resist for a little while longer, a shorter time and prepare somebody else to take the mantle of Co-Executive Director of the organization.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Thank you.

>> Shavel'le Olivier: My name is Shavel'le and I have cards with me because I do have to prepare, so you will see me looking down but I'll look at the crowd as well. I'm 27 years old and I live in Mattapan. I have been a Mattapan native for 15 years. I'm the Executive Director for Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition. We were founded in 2006 by a group of individuals who lived in Mattapan who were concerned about the health and wellness of the Mattapan community. Obesity, diabetes, hypertension were the main priorities when developing this organization and about 13, 14 years later we're still here. Mattapan Food and Fitness is a grassroots organization. We are really, really grassroots. Until I became the ED, we were all volunteer-based. Right now, I'm the only staff person and everybody else has a full-time job. One of my board members is here. We all have full-time jobs, but then the board members or our leadership team they do take time out of their jobs, outside of that to really try to do activities and programming to help the wellness and physical activity of Mattapan. Sorry, just getting a little nervous. On the physical activity side, our youth focus



on biking. We lead Mattapan on Wheels. We do some activities at our community garden such as ZUMBA and Yoga and things like that. On the healthy eating side, we run the Mattapan Square farmers market, it's in its 14<sup>th</sup> year, and our youth also do a farm stand in front of our local community health center and we do oversee and help to support two community gardens in the area. Our staff size is three, so we are all part time and we work with all age levels and so my end goal or end game with Mattapan Food and Fitness, since we're so small, getting an ED is life changing for us right now and so I really hope I can devote all of my time to building up the Mattapan Food and Fitness and give it some structure and foundations so we can grow.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Awesome. Thank you. And don't be worried about being nervous. We're all nervous so it's good. Thank you. That was great.

>> Carolyn Chou: Hello, everyone. I'm Carolyn Chou, I'm the Executive Director of the Asian American Resource Workshop. We were founded in 1979 and really founded out of the Asian American movement in the 1970's. And throughout our history, we have had many forms, but always been primarily an organization for Asian American young adults, 1.5, second plus second generation folks across ethnicities to come together, build community, build political power and kind of create new arts and culture work, new organizing campaigns that change conditions and different things. Kind of in the early iterations of AARW, particularly when immigration looked different, right, when who was here, who was Asian looked different. We were focused — we were in Chinatown for 30 plus years. We were doing media work before there was any Asian American representation in media. We were supporting Chinatown organizing against gentrification and violence that

was happening in the community. I think over the years there have been many questions of who are we, who do we want to be as an organization, what does the movement need from us at any moment and through that there have been many ups and downs. Our fearless founders came back whenever they needed to be the interim Executive Director. And I give them a lot of credit, you know I think to step forward when needed, but not overstep is a delicate balance. We need that continuity and history, and we need folks to be able to let things grow into different spaces and so, yeah, in the past, I have been at AARW for six years and really before I came on maybe in the last eight or nine years, we had real questions about how are we going to be financially sustainable, how are we going to serve our best role in the movement and through that, we started doing work with Southeast Asian young adults, particularly in Fields Corner, to build organizing capacity and now are really organizing around issues across Asian ethnic groups and creating interethnic solidarity around issues of displacement, gentrification, deportation, and criminalization that affect different parts of the Asian community. I came out of youth service work when I was in college and loved working with young people and also really wanted to understand what it looked like to organize, to change — to change and build power, right, and to make the world that the young people I love so much, particularly in Fields Corner, to make the world look different for them, so that brought me to AARW and learn what organizing was and I am lucky to be part of, not just the Asian American organizing community, but the broader Boston organizing community that has really invested in me and our organization and let us grow into this new role. I think, as we move forward, I don't know what I'm committed to seeing the organization into this new stage, I don't know what that means for my role long term. But I definitely— Every time things that I thought were kind of little ideas in my head,

seeds I planted, when they become not my idea, right, those are the best moments when my name has nothing to do with something, I feel like, you know, I hope we get to a place with the organization where these ideas that I had or the board had has ownership by our member leaders. We are a member-based organization and that it can grow beyond the ideas I can see in front of me now.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Awesome. Thank you, so you all touched on some structural issues and structures that existed that maybe created condition for success or didn't, so we're going to come back to that. Just want to let you know, now you know who these amazing people are and to give you a sense of the evening, I'm going to ask a few more questions that are your questions then you're going to ask your own questions. Start thinking about that and we'll keep really good time here so we can open the floor and make sure this goes in the direction that you're hoping. Sorry to have my back to so many of you over there. So maybe you could share, we'll do one more round of all of you speaking then we'll jump around a bit, if you could share a moment, you know, I mentioned the moment for me that was pivotal in moving into leadership. What was it for you? What was the piece in your journey that changed the game for you? Great, Shavel'le, go ahead.

>> Shavel'le Olivier: Sorry, waiting for the mic to turn on. So aside from my leadership team trusting me and being the ED of the organization, another game changing opportunity for me was really small, but when I was thinking about this question, I realized that I feel like all of the things I have done from this conversation that I had led me here. I was coming from Hannaford's, which is a grocery store, getting some refreshments for a Mattapan on Wheels event and I was with our board chair Vivian Morris and I was about maybe 22 or 23 at the

time and I asked her a question because she lets me ask any question that I like, so I asked her the question, “do you get paid for the work you do?” This was before I knew anything about nonprofit terminology, board members and what boards do and she answered no. She doesn't get paid for anything she did and my mind was blown. I was like wow. I said wow because she was literally and still is all over the place every MMFC event we had, she was there. Anything community related she is there, anything that has to do with the community, and I thought that Mattapan Food and Fitness was her full time job. Since then I've started volunteering my time with the organization. I was in college so I volunteered being the Youth Coordinator for the Coalition and I volunteered my time being the Youth Program Director and I volunteered being a Co-Chair, which you're supposed to volunteer your time. Through that volunteerism, I worked on my public speaking skills, grant writing skills, I met a lot of people, networking. She took me to a lot of conferences, different people's houses, different career fields that I was introduced to. Because I took on the thought of volunteering my time, I got to meet and do so many different things and it led me here to being an Executive Director and led me to being here in front of you all right now.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Thank you

>> Kendra Hicks: I had — there were a number of moments, but I think that along my trajectory that thing that really set me up for success was mentorship. I always think of my trajectory towards being an Executive Director was when I was 14 when I got my first mentor. And from that age, the people in my life saw something in me that made me want to pour into me, right, so I think that, you know the thing that changed everything was that

moment when people took an interest in me and poured into me. I have five mentors, all for different things and the same thing and overlapping things and those people have taught me but also have been my advocates, so for that reason, I have always been the youngest at this, the first to do that because there are people who have — who are brilliant and more experienced than me who have taught me things very early on and prepared me earlier than people are typically prepared to take things on. And so that's really a game changer for me and, folks, if you don't have mentorship now is the time. Yesterday was the time. One of the things that was a game changer for me was graduating from INP.

>> Yolanda Coentro: That was not done on purpose.

>>Kendra Hicks: I was like, oh, I'm the graduate, I'm the INP graduate. You know, I have worked since my first job, I have worked in nonprofit organization. I'm a co-founder nonprofit organization. I have never worked at any other place that is not a nonprofit. In my career, I have put 15 years in the nonprofit sector, so when I learned about INP and I interviewed with Yolanda, I actually applied for the Community Fellows Program. And we had a meeting and she was like, I think you might want to do the other one. So it was and that is what I did and you talk about the Institute for Nonprofit Practice about being a well networked place that is really what happened for me and I was able to not only grow professionally, because of the Institute for Nonprofit Practice, but the network of people that I had access to now was so different that I was able to build a lucrative consulting practice outside of that and I had at least five of my class members bring me in to their organizations to consult for them. That has also been really transformative because it positioned me as a leader in my field at the same time, so yeah.

>> Yolanda Coentro: A quick note on that, so what's the other program she went into, it is for leaders, for executives and what we found actually is a lot of times leaders of color come in and they place themselves in the spot where the people with the least experience are, and so what we're often doing is saying no, you belong in the room with the top dogs, that is where we want you. And that is why Kendra and I had that discussion. You know – can you hear me? You don't need to learn about social justice and build that community, you need to go lead Boston and so who do you need to be in a room with and thankfully, she accepted that invitation because if she said no, I wasn't really sure what I was going to do next, but that worked out OK. But I think it's an important point just to emphasize to not sell yourself short and make sure people open the doors for you and give you the seats that you deserve along the way and there is somebody, you both talked about mentors who help build that path. So if folks have questions about mentorship, ask them for sure, in a bit. All right, Elijah or Carolyn, who is up? Go.

>> Elijah Evans: So the game-changing opportunity for me happened at Bikes not Bombs. When I was 18 years old, I started college. It so happened to be a transition year for one of our full-time youth program staff members decided he wanted to start a family, wanted to move to western Mass and there was no one else really on staff who had as much or enough experience to take on the responsibility of running the programs that he was running, so I saw it as an opportunity for me to really step up and take advantage of a role that I knew I could do. I built trust with the organization. There was a bit uncertainty as to whether I could fulfill the job. I was going to college full time, so just logistical questions were understandable, but it really turned out to be a game-changing opportunity for me, because

I'm still with Bikes Not Bombs and it helped shape leadership skills that I developed and I continue to rely on today. Part of that experience, I want to just kind of delve a little bit deeper. When I came on staff in 2007, 2008, we hired a new Executive Director and that director stayed for about three years and really helped turn around the organization. We were in a crisis because of the recession and it had an impact on us. Unfortunately, when she decided to transition, it put us in a pretty tough situation again. This time was about to sustain the growth we had achieved. TSNE MissionWorks actually provided us with an interim ED, an invaluable resource that helped us in that transition and it gave us the time to find a leader who could help carry us forward and we did. I had a huge role in not only participating in the process, but just learning what it would take to run an organization without an ED that you could rely on for being there for more than the year that they are committed to. That was also an opportunity for me to step up and really learn what it takes to be an ED. Even after that, I wasn't ready. I ended up enrolling in INP, the Community Fellows program, which gave me access to a network of people, some of which I'm in touch with, but the more importantly I think, it gives you validation you need to take those risks when the opportunities coming up, when there is a vacuum in leadership and you're kind of the right person to step up. I really appreciate INP for that and I really encourage all of you to look into that if you are interested in doing that.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Thank you. Also not intended. Thank you though. All right, Carolyn, you're the grand finale, no pressure on this one.

>> Carolyn Chou: And I just wanted to note that like any good millennial, I took my notes on my phone, [LAUGHTER] so if I have my phone in my hand, that's all it is. I'm not checking

something, just Evernote. Yeah, I think three things just hearing other folks talk I'm thinking about. One, I think, is being asked. Right, so, someone asked me to take over, and you know, of course at first, I was like, no and I was like, one year. And here we are and I don't know when I'll leave and I think just being asked, right, and having that conversation I think is critical, right, and it's what you said, Yolanda. Who gets asked, right, who sees themselves in those roles and how do we make sure we're asking folks to step up and scaffolding that for them, but, you know, that people are being asked. And the other thing is, yeah, I agree around mentors and just friends who get it. I have a lot of friends, both folks my age and older than me that are Executive Directors or who are former Executive Directors, and you know, like, we're just constantly talking and freaking out and trying to figure out if those grants are going to ever — checks are ever going to come in and how to support our staff better. And I think just people who, like, understand what you carry every day is so important to me and sustaining it and feeling part of, especially a community of women of color who are trying to figure it out, right. And then the third thing, now is a group of on staff. Like Shavel'le, when I came in, I was the only full time staff. We had had full-time staff in the past, but because of budgetary reasons, I was the only full-time person and when I became the Executive Director, I was still the only full-time person. It felt so isolating. It felt so— I don't know how long I can do this, you know, but as we were able to bring on people and there is a real community of other staff people, as well as board members and members, of course, but other people who are day in and day out is the work, I think I was suddenly, like oh, my God. When I feel like I'm part of a community here, I feel like I can do so much more. We can all do so much more than we could. So there is the Executive Director title, but there's also how do you create that kind of staff community and how do



you get the organization to a place where you can? I'm 100% sure I would have only stayed two years if we hadn't been able to hire anyone else because you have no thought partners. And having thought partners is the most important, both inside and out of your organization, I feel like for me, has been the most game changing and important part of my work.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Awesome, thank you. So Elijah and Shavel'le maybe you can take this one. I heard you both kind of talk about volunteering, working, leading in your organizations and I'm wondering what you take into your leadership from your experiences before on the ground, if you will, I know the ED job is on the ground and above ground and all of that, but as you think about what you're bringing with you today, what is that perspective? How does it shape how you lead?

>> Shavel'le Olivier: So when I'm asked this question, I do look at it from a personal growth perspective, because being with and working with Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition, having a group of seven to eight strong African American, West Indian ladies to support me in whatever I was doing, I can't help but take that perspective. I did lose track of the question, so can you please ask it again.

>> Yolanda Coentro: So what from being in more of a volunteer and kind of learning role are you bringing now to being the leader?

>> Shavel'le Olivier: So what I'm bringing now into being the leader is being patient because my leadership team was patient with me when I was going through this journey from being a Vigorous Youth when I was 17 years old and 10 years later to being the ED. I'm taking patience. I'm also taking the time to get to know each and every person that I connect with

because my leadership team took the time to understand me and connect with me. I'm also taking the time to let — we have a youth group called the Vigorous Youth and I'm also taking the time to let our youth group explore their creativity, just like, again, my leadership team did with me. They wanted to do a bike repair workshop, and so we let them do the curriculum there. We let them do the research. We let them pick the date, the time, the place, so just letting them be creative because my leadership team did that with me, again, what I'm bringing with me to this leadership is patience, um, letting people lead when they want to and the just listening to others as well.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Thank you. Elijah?

>> Elijah Evans: Um, so what I think about when I hear that question is, um, what are some of the challenges that persist maybe that I — sorry, what I can think about when I hear that question is challenges that are related to our mission and how do I bring a different perspective or voice to the table because we know that in the industry, cycling industry and it has been predominantly white men that dominated the conversations and I think making an effort to make sure that my voice is heard. It is obviously, a lot easier now being in this role to make sure my perspective and the perspective of people who think like me are voiced, but certainly as a volunteer, kind of moving my way up in the organization, I had to really advocate for the needs of our constituents in a way that, I think shifted the dynamic within the organization. We're still figuring that out, struggling with it and persevering. So part of what has helped me do that is challenges within Bikes Not Bombs. It's also been informed by my experiences as a Metco student, and my experiences just being a cyclist in general, there are not many cyclists of color. It's a systemic issue and an institutional issue,

and one that I think our organization, if we are to achieve social justice, which is in our mission, really need to make sure we're taking into account the people who are directly affected by the work that we do, so I think advocating for those voices is something I continue to strive for.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Awesome, thank you. Yeah, that deserves a round of applause or some snaps for sure. So Kendra, we were just having a conversation earlier about the structure at Resist and how structure can shape the opportunity for everybody to thrive and for the organization to thrive, and so I'm wondering maybe you could share with everybody more about the co-director structure and what you think it solves and where are the challenges within it?

>> Kendra Hicks: Yeah, sure, so when I started working at Resist five years ago, we already had a flat structure, but it was just flat without any actual structure. [LAUGHTER] So I'm like, the lack of hierarchy does not a collective make, [LAUGHTER] lesson number one. And so we had to learn a lot of lessons from having, you know, not having hierarchy, but not having a collective structure to do our work and that took some transition, and so two years ago, we worked with the Anti-Oppression Resource and Training Alliance (AORTA) and Autumn Brown came and facilitated a retreat with the staff at Resist because we're working through these issues that were coming up in our structure, mainly just like accountability and mutual support within the staff because there was no hierarchy. There isn't somebody for you to respond to, there isn't somebody there to tell you what you need to do, right. You have to be really self-guided and you need parameters for that to happen. And so Autumn recommended that we look at this worker self-directed nonprofit model and we did and said

hey, this looks like it might work for us. Let's try it out and that's what we did. We spent some time building it, so the worker self-directed nonprofit model is a regular, traditional nonprofit and a collective, so it is traditional nonprofit, plus cooperative equals worker self-directed nonprofit and it is a framework. It is not a model. This is not like, here, this is how everybody should do it, but it is actually a framework and you build your work around your individual organization and how you do your own work, so we had to do that. We had to think about what were the buckets and the circles of work within our organization and how we wanted to do that work. And so right now, everybody is a co-executive Director. We are a staff of four people and everybody manages their own circle of work and so because I'm the Director of Radical Philanthropy, I'm charged with managing our fundraising, but I'm not the only person in my circle. There are two other people in my circle and we work collaboratively. And so although my responsibility is to ensure the work happens, but I'm not doing the work alone. And so the conversation Yolanda and I were having is we have a generation of Baby Boomers who have been in leadership at these organizations for decades and because of the hierarchical structure we have, all of our work within our organizations is siloed and nobody in the organization is actually prepared to take on all of that organizational knowledge and all of that work because nobody has been doing that work with the Executive Director. And so when you have a collaborative model or a more collaborative model, it means that everybody is doing the work together. So if I were to step outside and get hit by a truck the people at Resist would be fine.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Or win the lottery.

>> Kendra Hicks: Yeah, or win the lottery. Let's be a little less nihilistic. [LAUGHTER] I don't know if I would stop working if I won the lottery, that's a good consideration. You know, if I for some reason needed to leave or if I was turning 65 and retiring, the people in my organization would be able to continue the work because there was a culture of collaborative work and that means that everybody who is a part of that circle, not just me, can take on the workload. And so I think what it solves for is this issue of transition and also onboarding people, right, so when you're doing work alone there isn't really anybody, like, how are you going to replace 25 years of organizational knowledge. So my directive when I think about nonprofits, is to think beyond a hierarchical structure, right. How can— what are small things you can do to make it more collective, which means everybody takes responsibility for it.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Yeah, one of the things that was in the TSNE report, but is always talked about relative to the movement, I think that millennials are making in the nonprofit workforce is to no longer accept that life needs to end when you take on a nonprofit job. That all of you, literally all of you, has to go to this work and burn out so high and you hear about kind of boards looking for that heroic leader in the report that was put together. I'm just curious in your context, what is that burnout balance kind of feel— feel like when you don't carry the whole load home every day or is it not that different? Is the same challenge because you're in the nonprofit sector and we haven't cracked that code. Give us some hope.

>> Kendra Hicks: It feels completely different. I have been at Resist for five years and I'm like people should work at places like Resist forever, but we don't. For one, I think that is

one of the things I wanted to point out is the length of time that people stay in their positions and they sit in their seats. At Resist, we have a seven-year cap for that reason because, one, you know things change in seven years. We don't want our organization and work to get stale and, two, nobody should be working at the place for — there is no — if you're not leaving, you're not opening space for somebody else to take over, so we're very clear about, like this is — this is the trajectory of a staff person at Resist. You start working here and this is your trajectory for the seven years that you're here. And then you transition out and somebody else comes. And so that's one thing that I wanted to point out. We have— When I first started working at Resist, that burnout very much did exist because there was a lack of structure, but we created a very robust mutual support and accountability structure within our organization. And so for us the relational piece of our work is just as important as our grant making. We have monthly all staff retreats at Resist. We go to our office twice a week, three days out of the week we work remotely. On Fridays — I mean during the summers, we have a four-day workweek. We have a ton of time that people get to take off, like there are things we do together as a staff.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Are you hiring? [LAUGHTER]

>> Kendra Hicks: No. Yeah, but it is not only that, right, like for example feedback. We have three separate cycles of feedback, we have individual feedback that is like my feedback, that isn't just feedback at my job, it is professional feedback, personal feedback, spiritual feedback. It's like, hey, what are you doing to take care of yourself? Have you been doing your morning practice? Or we've noticed that you are on edge because you haven't been doing your morning practice, so maybe you should pick that back up again, so it is beyond

the work. It's also personal, so we have individual feedback. We have our own organizational feedback and so we give ourselves feedback about how we are living into our values organizationally and because we have a culture of feedback, it alleviates that you have to hold people accountable if they do something wrong. And that's a whole other stress that we don't have that nonprofits bring on. And so implementing those mutual support practices made it so that we're not only more effective at our job but we are kicking ass. Sorry. Resist is just doing really well. Our budget is growing every year. We're giving away more money. The people that work there are super happy. [APPLAUSE] I don't want to brag but, it was all our structure. It was all our structure.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Awesome. You know, I think sometimes people think about dismantling structure, therefore that insinuates there's a lack of structure and I love what you're trying to is just a different kind of structure and I think that is important to kind of think about and note because in the move to dismantle structure, we could leave chaos and disorganization and we've got to be really careful about that, so thank you for that. Carolyn, you lead an identity-based organization. You're the only one here that represents kind of one community that specifically and I'm wondering if you could just talk about the advantages to that, kind of what you take from it in terms of your joy around the work, but then where is the struggle?

>> Carolyn Chou: Yeah, so I think the Asian American Resource Workshop, we organize Asian American folks and mostly young adults and our staff are Asian American identified and we're all under 30, so we all, I guess one of us just turned 30, and they might be watching [LAUGHTER], but you know, we're all within, we're members of our organization

as well and we identify that way. I think, the joy is that my life, my work, my politics, it gets to come together, right, and it doesn't — it feels really hard a lot of the time and it doesn't feel like a job all of the time because it feels like my life's work in a lot of ways, but then the challenges, where are the boundaries of that and how do I sort through, kind of what is the work that I need to be moving and what is other pieces that I'm doing more as a member, volunteer, you know. Because obviously, as a salaried Executive Director, you are working all of the time, so what are the lines in general, but particularly when you are a member of your organization, right. But I think we are identity based, but we know within that there is so much expansiveness to Asian American identity, so for me as a Chinese-American person, mixed-race person, who is supporting a lot of work in the Southeast Asian, so particularly the Vietnamese community and we're growing South Asian organizing work this year. I think of it both around me as a member of the organization and how am I standing in solidarity with other parts of the Asian community that are often left out of the conversation, right, there is the whole model minority myth kind of conversation within the Asian community and how are we supporting working-class folks, folks from different ethnic, immigration backgrounds within the conversation. So it is about identity but it is also about how do we build that nuance around identity, and not just say we are all this, so we all have the same experience, right, but no, we all bring different experiences and we need to think about how we bring power and solidarity together. And then also, how do we not just create monolithic definitions, but yeah, we're identity based and we're also issue based. We work with other communities of color, other communities with issues that our community cares about and that is such a joy to the work to be able to be part of Asian American social justice community and be part of a broader community in my neighborhood, in my city that are



building towards a more justice, equitable city. But yeah, I think the challenge is probably as, and I think the rest of the staff would say this, as folks who are members of our organization, sometimes we just don't know where the line is, where does the day end? Where does it not and that's just, you know, it can be exhausting. So I think being disciplined about knowing that and knowing what your work plan is and then what are you — you might be interested in doing something outside of your work plan, so I go to other events that other staff members are running, not as the Executive Director. Of course, everyone knows I'm the Executive Director, but also because I'm a member and I want to learn more. I want to be part of that space. I hope that means I can continue to contribute in different ways beyond my time as the Executive Director. And I'm excited for the days I'm just a member of the organization.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Excellent. How many folks in this room are on a board or manage a board? I'm just curious. Show of hands. Awesome. Almost all of you are, obviously, managing a board. On a board? On a board, OK, so there's obviously a racial diversity problem on boards, it is a well-known thing. In the report, I believe the stat was 84% of nonprofit board members are white, most of them are older, over 50 or so. So two things I'm wondering, so you can answer either one and if we don't tackle one, I will bring us back. One is, is your experience that being the only one in the boardroom and if so, how do you navigate that dynamic? The other question is, so how do we move this forward and get more young people and more people of color on these boards? Anyone can go.

>> Carolyn Chou: So I think for our organization, similar to the staff, all of our board members are members. Everyone is under 40, I think and everyone is Asian identified and

we really value diversity among the Asian umbrella on the board, so it is a different and unique experience to manage the board. For most of them it is their first board, too. It is like I'm young and trying to figure it out and we're trying to, you know, coach folks to be board members as well. And so I almost feel like I have the opposite challenge of trying to both grow my own skills and support the board members in their development so they can continue to be part of other organizations and be resources beyond our own organization. On both the boards I'm on, I think I'm the youngest person and so, you know that is definitely — it is a dynamic and they are all run by women and when I started, my board is amazing, but you know folks were like, do you know the finances and do you know how to do that. You know, that is a real thing and the answer was kind of no, but probably as much as anyone. You figure it out, right? I think you do see those things play out all of the time and being, you know, the young idealistic board member and how do you kind of pushback against some of that, I think we have to be — I was lucky to be — I'm now on the board at the Phillips Brooks House Association and the board is half college students. And so I was lucky as a college student to be part of that board. And that is a space where college students we were like trained in nonprofit board skill sets and I think it has been huge for all of us in our growth and just like those ways we can create more developmental space for board members and have organizations that will take risks on board members and open the space for folks to ask questions. I think it is critical and to really create board culture, because I think it is easier on the staff side, but we can check each other on things like, micro-aggressions and the bigger things than micro-aggressions that happen all the time in those spaces. I think it is definitely more challenging to create that board culture than it is necessarily on the staff.

>> Kendra Hicks: Um, yeah, I would like to answer the question about how to get more people of color and younger folks to get involved with boards, because Resist had to transition from a majority white, Baby Boomer board to a 99% POC board in the last few years and so there were some lessons we learned about that. The first one for us, was the level of responsibility that the board takes on, right. So there is always this question about skills. Does this young person know how to do finance? So one of the things that the worker self-directed nonprofit model opened up for us, is that the model calls for the board to delegate the responsibility of leading the organization to the staff collective, so our board doesn't actually have decision-making power for the direction and the vision of the organization, which means that we don't need somebody to be an expert on how to do finances, because we have a finance person. We do have an expert of somebody who knows how to do finances and she's amazing and she was the only one that remains on the board since our transition because she really supported our vision, but it really opened that up because we are a grassroots foundation, our board doesn't have to be a fundraising board. You don't have to have connections. You don't have to know bunch of people, you don't have to be an expert at specific things because that work lies within the staff collective. So that was our first lesson. Our second lesson was the length and the timing of board meetings was not working. We're having full-day board meetings six times a year.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Everyone wanted to join your board. [LAUGHTER]

>> Kendra Hicks: Nobody wanted to join our board. Not only that, but in that moment, the board was making decisions on where the grants were going. So were meeting for an entire day six times a year to read grant applications and make decisions about grants. And so

when we transitioned to the worker self-directed nonprofit model that decision-making power was delegated to the grant making panel and so the board doesn't also have to do that. We can go to having four virtual meetings a year and one retreat at the beginning of the year together. When you release the workload then it is more accessible to people who are younger, working full-time jobs, might have not been on a board before. Then all of a sudden this board becomes accessible and now we have all of these rad people on our board who are just brilliant and supporting us in leading this organization.

>> Carolyn Chou: And just to add, I think one really specific thing that you said is important to me that the board does not have to be the only fundraising space. Even with our board, people are like, should we get folks who have fundraising networks? You can build other spaces for that. You can engage folks in that work. It does not have to be all on the staff, but what is the real role of your board and how do we create more space for different kinds of skill sets instead of assuming they all have to be on the board.

>> For us, the board is support and oversight. Send us the finances, is everything right? They're supporting us. What do you want to do? How can we help you figure this out? They are not making decisions about what we're doing, which changes the dynamic and the relationship between the board.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Elijah, go ahead and then we'll open it up.

>> Elijah Evans: Can you hear me? OK, so at Bikes Not Bombs we have a pretty traditional board in that there are clear decision making responsibilities that they retain and clear ones where they are delegated. And I think I found it invaluable to be on the board, having that

perspective, really learning what does it mean to support an Executive Director, so now that I'm in the role, I can really understand what to look for to give direction in terms of what ways they can support our work. But it makes me wonder if that traditional structure because we are predominantly white and male on our board how much it serves as a barrier to diversifying and actually getting some of our constituents on the board. I think that's definitely something we should really look at. I think what's worked well for us is really establishing clear roles and responsibilities, clear strategies for communicating with one another, because without that, like solid foundation of clarity, you can really get into tough situations where either as Executive Director I'm going beyond my role and the board is obviously, not going to respond well to that or I feel like the board is maybe a little bit too involved and should maybe take a step back and reflect on what its role it should be. I think clarity helps, communication helps. Elaine's Special Assistant actually happens to be my board chair so that has a lot of benefits, including able to just leverage all the resources he has access to here at TSNE MissionWorks, whenever there are trainings that come up, he's telling me sign up for that and make sure your staff members are getting involved with that and that has definitely been hugely helpful for us. We meet twice a month and we talk about everything and it has become a real partnership and I think that's really important to have in a board, because ultimately, at least in the traditional sense, they're responsible for executing our mission so that is how it works at Bikes Not Bombs.

>> Yolanda Coentro: One thing I will mention is, you shouldn't wait to ask to get engaged in an organization you care about either. A lot of times we wait for people to ask us to join a board, of course, everyone sitting on \$100 million is getting asked to get on a board, but that

does not mean organizations are not looking for you. Make yourself seen. A lot of folks in my network have been able to get on boards through friends or literally by volunteering at an organization or dropping lines to staff and saying hey, I would really love to get more involved, what does it take to get on a board here? And when you make yourself known, people start to see the possibility of you on a board too and we've just got to get better at advocating for ourselves and also, you know, helping other people create openings in those seats and leverage your network to do that, too. So we'll talk about mentorship as we close, but I want to bring it now to you. So what are your questions? Who has a question? Okay, we've got one over here. If you can introduce yourself and ask your question that would be great and tell us if you're affiliated with an organization, too. There will be a mic coming to you, I think. A mic that works. Right over there with the blue shirt behind the pole, yep.

>> Hello, everyone. We represent a 501 organization called Pharm Aid and we're dedicating to establishing affordable and accessible drug therapeutics to deal with the generic drug shortage.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Can I ask you to stand and speak up a little?

>> Sorry. My question for you guys, are all of you 501 organizations and if so, how do you maintain your tax exempt status and not get in trouble with the IRS? We're going through the process and this is important to us.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Good question. Any thoughts?

>> Kendra Hicks: I feel like I'm the closest to maybe messing. [LAUGHTER] I think we're pushing the envelope the most. We pay close attention. Our philosophy at Resist is that the nonprofit industrial complex is a system of control for our movements, maybe that is dramatic to say here, but –

>> Yolanda Coentro: There were snaps.

>> Kendra Hicks: So, our philosophy is that the nonprofit industrial complex is a system of control and that our job as a foundation, specifically is to take the brunt so the people we fund don't have to. So our lawyer, who is also super rad, helps us push the envelope just enough to subvert the control that the nonprofit industrial complex is trying to take, but also still stay within the parameters of the law and not break the law, so that's really, it is a risk that we take, but taking a risk is part of our history, so we keep doing it.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Anyone want to add? No, so I can add to that. I kind of picked up INP we were part of the organization and then became independent under my leadership, so we started kind of as a startup, like you might be now and have grown since. I worked on really getting other nonprofit leaders to advise me by sharing things like what is your finance manual, what procedures do you use so I don't do something illegal and just starting with the very basics. Now, we subcontract out to a pretty reasonable for us, kind of CFO who manages our audit and takes a lot of that heat off of us and so they don't have to be full time, you know, either. But I don't have to be a finance expert and that was really important to figure out how to create that sustainability. Every nonprofit leader would have gone through this, right, so I would just tap some people. I rarely encountered someone who I

asked for help who said no, I don't have time for you, especially if you're talking about finance and you're like, this is serious, I need your help. So if you ever want to talk to someone on my team, I would be happy to connect you.

>> Elijah Evans: Just to add, the Nonprofit Finance Fund is an invaluable resource.

>> Yolanda Coentro: A hand somewhere over here, I believe behind this pole. All right. I know this person. Hold on. The mic is coming your way. Thank you, the captioning, yes.

>> Trina Jackson: Hi, my name is Trina Jackson and I'm with TSNE MissionWorks and I'm an admirer of all of these people on the panel. So my question is, you know, one of the things that we've been learning about having people of color in leadership of nonprofits is the way that people of color lead is not always been valued within the nonprofit structure, and so I'm wondering how you have created space for you to lead the way that resonates with you and where you come from and the communities that have raised you? In other words, how have you been able to lead in a way that resonates from your values, from your communities, and how have you carved out a space to do that and how have you been able to negotiate and push back on expectations of leadership that are really like shaped by a nonprofit structure that has been white led? Thank you. >> Shavel'le Olivier: I will try to take a crack at that question. When I was undergrad, I took a leadership class because I was really shy and I really wanted to break out of that mold. At the end of the class, I learned that leaders come in all shape and sizes, yes, it is cliché, but I really took away that leaders come in all shapes and sizes. Even though I'm mostly quiet and reserved and possibly don't come off as being a leader as people say a leader is supposed to be, I can be a leader with



a personality that I have, which is somewhat goofy and immature. I learned I can be quiet. I learned I can be serious at times and so throughout my journey I'm taking that with me. The second part of your question is taking that and leading that into the communities that you serve. Because I am who I am, a lot of people take to me. I don't act like, I don't come into a room and say I'm the Executive Director of such and such, I just say I'm Shavelle, I'm a Mattapan resident. People come and ask me questions and I just answer it, I don't come off as I'm above them or under them. They are the community I'm serving. I am just like them. I live in Mattapan or Dorchester or Roxbury. I'm just like them and a title doesn't mean anything.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Thank you.

>> Carolyn Chou: Yeah, Trina, I appreciate the question. It is a real struggle, right, to figure out those balances and I think particularly, I think even just having an Executive Director title, I value the collective. I value community, I value partnership and there is a way in which the title itself creates this dynamic where you're supposed to have the answer and you're supposed to present yourself a certain way and you're supposed to always be on and all of this stuff, and so how do we, as we think about what structures can push back and work for our organizations, because you know, I think I'm inspired by what Resist has done and I think that we all have to figure out what structures we can move, even within a traditional structure, how do we, how do I name — I try to name when I made mistakes or messed up or feel I need to, you know, be accountable around something that has happened. You know, I think trying to create a dynamic where it feels more collective, not just within the staff, but our member leaders, the folks who are leading our work day-to-day. And to me, I

was thinking about this as I was trying to prep for this panel, how can I see being the Executive Director more as walking along other people, walking alongside people to make change and not just, you know, standing in front of the room or presenting the budget, but really that my role, and I think this comes from a value place, is around walking alongside people and walking with them on that journey to make change in our community. And how do you both do the things that need to happen, because you have an organization that you need to keep legally, fiscally sound and, like, know where your energy is and where your values are and one thing Suzanne Lee, who is a long time organizer in Chinatown, she says every conversation that you have, that's what is important. I get in my head like I have all of these e-mails to respond to, but every time you sit down with someone that is the real work and how do I value all of the different things I'm doing in the day and not just like, I have to get this done. Of course, we have those days, but how do say that is the work and being Executive Director is being blessed to be part of that work. It is not these other things are just the grind that I will do, you know.

>> Yolanda Coentro: I just want to push on this point a little bit and see if Kendra, you can take this on, but what happens when that is not accepted? You are not accepted in the boardroom, your style, your approach to leadership is called into question, how do you rise and face that? I don't know Trina, if you're kind of maybe going to that, right, but how do you deal with it, overcome it, push it forward, make sure it doesn't take you, the collective us, over?

>> Kendra Hicks: Thank you for that refrain. I wanted to speak about this in particular because I am very prone to being the charismatic leader. I am that person. All of the ways

that white supremacy tells you to behave to be successful and I very squarely am good at those things, and that is part of the reason why I've been able to be successful. And so for me, you know, as a person of color, you come in and you're like you know what happens if your leadership style is different? And what happens if your leadership style is exactly the same and you're a Black woman? And you're like actually, I'm a type A, and I'm trying to do — you know a lot of the work I needed to do in stepping into leadership was to figure out how to make space and it wasn't about, um, values, because I came from a grantee organization and I'm a girl from the hood and so, all of those things, I was always myself, but in the way I did my work, the way I did my work, I had to figure out, like, oh, um, I — I had to come to terms with the fact that I'm successful because I do things this way and that I'm accepted in a lot of places because I'm palatable in those ways. And the other side of that coin is that some of us are really good at switching it, you know, code switching and going in and managing it. And so, to model a little vulnerability, that is something I had to struggle with to learn from, but, you know, still at Resist, I came up against that wall of being young and being Black and people not really wanting to take leadership from me and not agreeing with the direction that I was trying to move the organization in. The way I came across that was through community because the other people that I worked with were a support system for me. There were the naysayers and then people that kind of wrapped themselves around me and said we can do this. We can fight this. The way you're doing it is valuable and is going to make us and put us in a separate direction, so you know I work at a really small organization and some of us work at bigger organizations, so find your people. Who are your people who are going to support you and champion you and push you forward? Because at the end of the day, doing the work in a value aligned way helps you

meet your mission, so it is actually to the benefit of the organization to move things in that direction and sometimes it takes a really long time and sometimes it takes hell and high water, which was my experience, but it happens when your people have your back and people are championing you, you know. That is all I got.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Elijah, you want to add?

>> Elijah Evans: Yeah, so, definitely a lot of things are coming up for me in this conversation. I think what comes to mind is some of the challenges that I have had working with a predominantly white board and the perceptions of me that it comes with because they never had or not in a long time had an ED of color that came from the programs and in a lot of ways, I own this and I unapologetically advocate for the needs of our constituents. I feel like that's my job and since I'm a participant, I own that responsibility, but it has been met with, at times, challenging interactions, micro-aggressions, things I think I probably should have been prepared for, but wasn't and I think what helped me in the moment was having people who I could rely on and talk through it with, am I perceiving it this way, am I being over sensitive, if not, what should I do about it? They really came through for me. Lisa Owens, from my INP experience, Lisa was my coach and is now the ED of City Life and she is in the same complex as me at Bikes Not Bombs and I can run up the stairs, go to her office and talk to her about whatever is going on and that has been incredible for me because there aren't that many other leaders of color in JP and I think it is important that we stick together and really help to navigate these issues. I think we have to call out micro-aggressions, race-based bigotry, whatever it is, small, big, overt, or not. And when you do, really stand your ground and hold firm and know you're speaking truth to power and

whoever you're speaking to probably needs to hear what you're about to say. I think that is the advice I would give and that helped me to navigate the challenging issues and it's made interacting with, engaging with and working with the board even better having overcome some of these challenging issues.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Yes, scanning the room here. We'll go to the middle of the room then to the left and then to the right. Remember to say your name too.

>> Hello, everyone. My name is Berlinda Mojica. I'm a search consultant with Isaacson and Miller. My question has to do with one of the struggles that a lot of us millennials are facing is student loan debt and entering the nonprofit sector isn't as attractive as entering the private sector. I'm wondering advice you all have for millennials who have these social justice driven values in them and want to pursue the careers, but find it really hard to make it viable given the offers that come from the private sector versus nonprofit?

>> Yolanda Coentro: Good question. Did everyone hear that? No. I'm noticing it's really hard to hear across the room. The question is let's talk about student debt for millennials and a lot of offers from the nonprofit sector and from the private sector. You want to do nonprofit work but how do you make that decision as you're balancing those two, so go ahead and I will come to you.

>> Kendra Hicks: Go to the private sector..

>> Yolanda Coentro: OK, there is that. Tell us more.

>> Kendra Hicks: I mean this is one of the things that nonprofits call to do is be martyrs for the cause. If you're in \$100,000 of debt, they want you to come here because this is what social justice work and nonprofit work does. It plays at your basic instincts to want to serve and to offer you crumbs. Nonprofit organizations need to pay their workers a living wage [APPLAUSE], one, and you don't have to martyr yourself and struggle and not eat and not pay your rent because you want to do good work. The work that you get paid for does not have to be your heart work. You can go somewhere and get paid and do the work that you're passionate about on a volunteer basis. You can join a group. You can do organizing work. And so don't – because this is one of the things that the nonprofit work calls on us to come and do good work that is going to save the world, get paid \$30,000 and eat peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for dinner and that is our work to do. These nonprofit organizations, we have to figure that out. You can't put your people through struggle because you're trying to help other people not struggle, like people need health care. They need to be paid and so, you know, if you can't afford to go work at a nonprofit, go to the private sector, pay off your student loans and then do something else. Do not martyr yourself because you think that is what you're supposed to do to serve your people. You can do that on your free time. [APPLAUSE]

>> Yolanda Coentro: What do other folks think?

>> Shavel'le Olivier: I think you did a good job on answering that. [LAUGHTER] I would say that I also have just been in a nonprofit sector since I started. Since I graduated. I was at the AmeriCorps Service and I did that for three years and I volunteered at that service. And then I had my first full-time job at a local neighborhood health center and that also was a

nonprofit at well. But I still loved doing my Mattapan Food and Fitness stuff as well. So I've always had a job and then I did my Mattapan Food and Fitness stuff because like you said, that was really calling me. If I could work there, I would work there, and now I'm happy that I do. Do I get paid a lot of money for it, probably not. I'm still probably going to volunteer my time doing this, but you should definitely listen to what Kendra said. I always had a full-time job and did my volunteer service on the side.

>> There was a comment in the back of the room, Elaine, if you could—Thank you. It's related to this I'm assuming. Could you say your name.

>> So my name is Marisa and I'm an administrative assistant for an architectural firm in Boston and as a millennial, this is my second career. I appreciate that you brought up that comment about student loans. It is a huge, huge discussion, I would say. I wonder what the pool is though? Is it everybody or just a single—just certain people, like what is it, but one common thread I agree with is kind of tough, but I agree with you at the end in the really pretty white dress, you shouldn't have to sacrifice and that shouldn't be an option at all. As curiosity, what is the pool in regards ethnicity, we'll just say that. It is everybody, singular, what is it? >> Yolanda Coentro: When you say what is the pool, what do you mean exactly?

>> Ethnicity? Just all of us, like what is the pool? It is everybody? I feel like student loans are crazy.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Oh, who are student loans affecting?

>> Is it just the millennials?

>> Yolanda Coentro: Oh, no.

>> It is everything, right. I think as a millennial and I'm 32, which I assume is the middle. I'm in the middle, right, has it affected everybody? Is it just that, it is not Gen-Z, but student loans is a huge, huge topic and by everyone's reaction, it is a big one, too. >> Yolanda Coentro: If you think about it more broadly, so it affects millennial, Gen-Xers, when you go up the chain, when you're a parent, it affects you. Can you work \$30,000 a year and have two kids and send them to college? Probably not, so I would say it is a cross-cutting issue, so I wouldn't put it in a category maybe — right, right. Of course there is disproportionality in there, right, like, so who can afford to cut their student loans down? Who knows how to navigate the financial aid process? There is so much nuance there, but I appreciate you bringing up the point. So other thoughts, I'm just curious on this idea of, so can you work in the nonprofit sector and get paid? This is real talk right now. I got lots of hands. Great, Elaine is back there. We're going to come up front. OK.

>> Hi, I'm Tatyanna Joyce and I'm from Commonwealth Corporation. I love that this—Oh, I know Elijah. You don't know me. But I know you. I love this question came up, because in my work I work for the workforce competitiveness trust fund and literally the thing I get most excited in my job is about making sure that state funding is going to organizations that are providing training across our major sectors, manufacturing, construction, health care that these folks are receiving training to get access to sustainable wages, so I just love that. All that to say, I spend a lot of time reviewing grants. Please, please, please, please, please do not believe someone who says they cannot pay you what you deserve to be paid. [SNAPS] I just have to say that. I had to stand up and say that because I review these grants and I see



amazing training organizations who are providing this training and they are paying their workers what they deserve and that is why their staff doesn't have high turnover rates, because we all see it. Yolanda mentioned the burnout. It happens. We know it's real. Please do not believe someone that tells you that you do not deserve to be paid, which you know with your education, with your lived experience, right, because maybe we don't all have four-year degrees or two-year degrees, but we have lived experience, we have been in the workforce, please know what that's worth and don't accept an offer, also, don't forget to negotiate that offer that you deserve. [SNAPS]

>> Yolanda Coentro: I think we have our future panelist.

>> Elaine Ng: Can I add to that? So this is a shameless plug for TSNE. Go to our website. We have free resources on our website, one of those free resources is a report called Wage Equity Matters. TSNE has for the past decade has been doing annual reports on wages in the nonprofit sector, by region, by field within the nonprofit sector, by positions, by gender, by age, and by race, so go to that report and you can peg, if you're getting a job offer whether it is an equitable offer, because you can see across organizations what people are offering for different positions and cross budget sizes.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Yeah, if you want to get personal, you can go to every organization's 990 — you will see what the top five people make on their tax returns and they are all \$100,000 over salaries because that is what they have to report, so you will see where the jobs are and that's the path to rise. That is why we're here, how do we rise into these positions as well and gain the experience and not to undercut the idea that you shouldn't get

a job where you can get paid, both things are true. You have to decide for you. I saw a whole row of people so I'm going to come here and go this way. OK.

>> Hey guys. My name is Elise. I work as a youth program social worker at Brigham and Woman's Hospital. I really appreciate your response for advocating for our worth. I got into the field of social work because I care about people and I started by studying social work at a bachelor level and realized that there is an easy, steep ceiling that you hit pretty quickly with a bachelors in social work, so I came to Boston to pursue my masters in social work at Boston College because I realized that in that field there is a limit on how much money you can earn with only a bachelors degree. From my personal experience, I feel really passionate about financial literacy and I'm really fortunate that when I was in college I was able to take a finance class and for me that really shaped my view of organizing my money and I'm in control of my money and instead of my money controlling me. And I'm really proud to say I'm three months away from being debt free with two degrees as a social worker. [APPLAUSE] I say that just because in our generation, we get so caught up into that and I remember after I graduated everyone talked about loan forgiveness, public service forgiveness and putting off your loans and paying the minimum and waiting forever to do that. And I just didn't believe that early on and I think I'm fortunate to have mentors who told me that is not the only option. I believe strongly in advocating for our worth and negotiating for raises, especially as a woman of color. I feel strongly about that, I preach that really strongly. I have attended salary negotiation workshops, which if no one has done that, I encourage you to do that. We need to speak our confidence. We need to speak about our experience and not be sold short and expect work to do work out of the goodness of your

heart because that does not pay the bills. So I feel strongly about that, but I wanted to share my piece about take a financial class, go to a salary negotiation class. It goes a long way. It really boosted my confidence.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Thank you. A couple more comments then I'm going to move into the next question. Right here in this middle row. OK. We have a spokesperson for row two right now. OK.

>> Hello everyone, my name is Lorena Lopera. I work with Latinos for Education. I really appreciate your question and I do agree that we should not martyr ourselves. I do, however, believe if you fully are passionate and desire to be in this work, you can be in this work and actually make a living wage. I'm a mother of two. I am a homeowner. I'm a millennial and I'm not saying pull yourself up by your bootstraps, but what I'm saying is advocate for yourselves because it is absolutely necessary, especially as people of color, especially as women of color. What I will also say is, when I graduated from college, nobody told me to look at being a teacher. So I'm not saying it is easy work, because it is not, what I can say here in Boston and here in Massachusetts, you can make a pretty decent wage working directly with our students and families that need us and need people of color and don't need more white people in their classrooms, so you can make a living, good, decent wage being a teacher of color here in our system. I am fortunate to have people like my friend Mindy here who have supported me professionally, because we can talk about our salaries. Let's not keep it a secret, people. What you make, you should be able to have conversations with your people and say you deserve more. You need to advocate for yourself, so that is all I have to say.

>> Yolanda Coentro: One more comment up front? Nope, good? Sure? All right, let me take a couple questions. I'm going to bring it back to you all on building your network in a second. Go ahead, or don't go just yet until a microphone has arrived.

>> Hi, I'm Shreya. I work with the Union of Concerned Scientists and I have a quick response to that but I also have a question. One of the things that UCS did was bring in an external auditor to look at any disparities across gender and sexual orientation and race around pay and a few of us ended up getting market bumps, so that is something if you plant the seeds to your leadership, this is something the organization now is going to start doing to make sure everyone is getting paid appropriately for their experience and their lived experiences and there is no discrepancy among any of the identities, so there are resources and consultants, especially if your organization has the capacity to do that, I would recommend looking into that. My question, this kinda happens in nonprofits, I think in places where people really feel connected to the mission and vision where you think about the work place as a family, however, it's not a family. It is still a workplace, there is still boundaries. So as leaders, especially leaders of color, how do you balance creating a community at work where people can bring in their full authentic self, but not taking advantage of the familial type feelings and establishing appropriate boundaries?

>> Yolanda Coentro: OK, so building community at work while not taking advantage of familial type feelings and establishing appropriate boundaries. Work wants to be a family, is not a family, did I get that? OK, you all heard that, OK, who is taking that one? Great.

>> Kendra Hicks: The people at my job are my family. No, kidding, like we have created a culture at my office where it is like that and the way we circumvent it by having clear policies and practices, and by sticking to them. Like no, it doesn't matter that we are close, because this is what our policy says and this — like if you have a process outlined for everything, this is the streamline process about how we make decisions about raises, this is the streamline process about how we make decisions about this, you to have clear decision-making policies because your policies and practices will circumvent those relationships because that's just what they are. So if you are in a situation where you feel like those familial ties are playing into that, look into what the policies are and reference that. Because that makes it less personal, it removes it. Because you can get into, you can get into those things. One of my co-workers is also the person who has been my mentor since I was 13 and my other co-worker is someone I have known since I was in high school, and so, you know, this all happened by happenstance. We just ended up working in the same place together, but we have been in situations where is it has been like, you're supposed to be my people and you did X, Y, and Z and it was like, oh, because we don't have a process, a clear process by which to do this that applies to everybody, so we created it. Now, you remove those things and so practices and policies are really important and decision-making processes are really important when you are trying to build familial culture at work.

>> Elijah Evans: I would add, in addition to that, make sure there is a culture and there is a space where people can raise issues in a way that maybe is aligned with your values, but still leads a positive work atmosphere, because ultimately that's the point of establishing more familial relationships so you can do the work better, but when it becomes an obstacle,

you want policies and practices in place to make people comfortable to raise those issues without undermining the relationships that they hold dear.

>> Carolyn Chou: Yeah, I mean, I think those two points really resonate with me. I think the only other thing is naming, I think especially within some of the hierarchical relationships can be challenging, so just like naming how we're showing up, right, sometimes on a weekend, we are talking about work or we're just I'm going to your birthday party, but willing to name what the boundaries are, right, and opening space especially as someone who has power within the hierarchy for other folks to name if they need different boundaries. And I think, because it is true, we do — it is not a bad thing to have the close relationships, but how do you create the structures and then where the structures may not exist because you're still evolving them within the organization, at least provide the room to name the boundaries and how you're showing up together. And to sometimes name, this is outside. This is not a work thing or we're going to spend 15 minutes to talk about this work thing and that is not what we're doing today. Of course, those things feel forced, but otherwise, it gets so blurry it can lead, as I think Kendra is saying it can lead to hard feelings and complicated dynamics.

>> Shavel'le Olivier: And I would like to say that is exactly how in my perspective how MFFC is, they are like my family and I love them so much. I go to their houses for parties and they take me everywhere and they go to my graduation, we are just so close. I'm learning a lot, thank you for asking that question, I'm learning a lot how can I create those boundaries how I'm working there and not volunteering there.

>> Carolyn Chou: And the only thing—that we don't need to compromise our personal relationships to do that, right, that it's still so important that we get to go get a drink with our friend or be part of each other's lives in the ways Shavel'le was saying, but you have to figure it out.

>> Elijah Evans: I'll just add, one of the things I took away from being a Teach for America corps member is how to have difficult conversations. There is a whole framework, protocol that they train us in, but ultimately the point of it is to raise issues that may be uncomfortable or may be challenging the dynamic that you ideally want to create, but it's important to raise the issue and being prepared to have those difficult conversations, especially as Executive Directors is just having the mindset will help ease the problem-solving part of the process.

>> Yolanda Coentro: I'm going to bring it back to the audience, but two themes are coming up. So one is mentorship, you've got mentors and social capital, just generally building those connections, so I'm wondering if any of you could talk a little bit more for folks who are like, yeah I don't have a mentor, how do I go find a mentor? That's a mystery. Or how do I actually leverage a network and get a meaningful network? What do you advise people to do?

>> Elijah Evans: I have a book of business cards that I just collect. Every time I meet someone I put it in there and it becomes just like an encyclopedia that I can reference every time I want to look up an organization or connect to someone or introduce someone to someone else. Often that is what I'm asking people to do and people ask me to do that. Definitely do that, by the way, like on LinkedIn, or any kind of social media, if you know you

have mutual connections with someone, ask them to introduce you. Oftentimes that helps kind of ease the conversation that you want to have with that connection and I think there is value in the relationships that you already have so, yeah, I would start with that.

>> Shavel'le Olivier: If you are a kind of reserved or shy person like myself, if you don't feel comfortable cold calling them on the phone or meeting them in person, like Elijah said having them introducing — what you said, I can't say it properly, or what I like to do is if there is an event going on with one of our partners, I ask one of our board members to come with me. They are very talkative and very engaging and I can come off a little shy, and so they introduce me to who they are talking to and I come into the conversation and then I start making my own connections there.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Any other advice? Other questions? I saw a hand. Right back here. Yep.

>> I just want to start off by saying I appreciate the solidarity that I feel in this space. I don't get that at work so it this is an awesome event to get a chance to come to. What drew me coming to the event is that we are going to talk about the challenges and in the description it talked about — we talked about turnover and how leaders are often expected to sort of rise to the occasion, without much support or not really having the experience or being at an organization that is under resourced and that's something that I'm experiencing now at my organization and it is hard to be led by a supervisor who is, um, in their first year, um, in the role and don't have a lot of experience. And I'm a recent college graduate. I graduated a year ago. This is my first job. I expected to have more mentorship, I expected to have more



experience at a nonprofit. I feel like whenever I've voiced my ideas or my concerns, I think I'm often, not dismissed, but people think oh, you're young. You're inexperienced. You don't know what you're saying, but I do know what to point out and I do know what I should be experiencing at a job and I don't know. I feel like — what I feel like doing now is leaving because I don't feel like I'm valued there, I wonder if you guys on the panel had any experiences feeling like you were led by people who are inexperienced or not being able to support you in the way that you wanted to in terms of your personal and professional growth?

>> Yolanda Coentro: How did you navigate it? Has anyone had that experience? >>

Shavel'le Olivier: Yeah, my first salary job working at a nonprofit. I came from AmeriCorps, which is serving at a nonprofit, so I was like, yay another nonprofit, but a bigger nonprofit with \$9 million salary and I can be an executive assistant and can learn about board governance and all of that. And during my time, I had three C.E.O.'s when I was working there. The last C.E.O. that was there — basically what I'm trying to say is that when I see that somebody in a leadership position, there are certain things I think that person should be doing or how they are supposed to be leading and some of the things I did not agree with what that C.E.O. — how that C.E.O. was moving and it made me not want to put in my all into that organization anymore, although I did have conversations with staff there and I still came in happy and things like that. My soul was like, no, this is not where I'm supposed to be. And, yeah, I just wasn't feeling it and that was why I left. When Mattapan Food and Fitness said they were going to get an ED, I left. I wasn't feeling safe there. I thought when my opinions were asked of me, the opinion was asked and then, you know, nothing was

done with it. And I'm the type of person, I don't like to talk as much, even though I'm talking now, I don't like to talk as much. And if I feel if you're asking me and I'm wasting my breath, I don't like doing that because it takes a lot for me to give me opinion anyway. How I navigated that: I continued the relationships I had with the staff people. Even though I was Executive Assistant and I was working closely with the administration, I kind of left my office a lot and spent time with the staff people, the customer service, the finance people, because that is where I found joy working with the support staff. So that's what I did, but I ended up leaving that organization because of that.

>> Yolanda Coentro: So if your mentor is not at work, where do you go? If anyone our here has an answer, too, feel free to raise your hand. So Kendra, the mentor rich panelist over here. At 14 years old, how did it begin for you? No, but what do you think? Where do you find a mentor if it is not at work? Anybody have an idea about that? Yeah, go ahead. And don't forget to introduce yourself.

>> Hi, everyone. I'm Alejandro. I was definitely in a similar position in a previous job and I'm an alum of the INP group and that program really helped me understand my situation and I was a the position where I felt like if I were to leave the organization, I would be abandoning the organization and if I stayed, I would be lying to myself. I wasn't self advocating basically, so I definitely found support within the organization through other people, which I valued for leadership. The INP group allowed me to access other mentors, so it goes back to a little bit what the panel is discussing and looking at your network that you have been developing and find people that you can rely on and it sounds like you need to transition and what is that process, so not just jumping into that, but planning for your legacy there because what

you have done thus far, you have done things. So making sure you are leaving a legacy and then finding a place that actually is supportive and where you receive what you should be receiving.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Thank you. Another person over here. Thank you.

>> I'm Dominique. I also was in that position a while ago and the thing that helped me was making sure I built out my network besides having a mentor. Mentors are very important, but you should build out the people who are your age and your peers and doing the same things you're doing and making sure that you have those conversations with them. Like, hey I'm struggling with this, how are you navigating it with it at your workplace? Because a mentor will give you advice when they went through it back then, but there are other people who are going through it right now and are going to have pertinent advice to you. That is my advice.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Thank you. Other questions?

>> My name is Erica. I'm the Director of Annual Giving at Gann Academy, which is a private, independent Jewish high school in Waltham, and my question to you is how do you — how have you engaged with colleagues and other volunteers who are people of color as well, but don't necessarily feel comfort with that distinction, with that terminology? I am a little bit older than millennials, I'm just above it and I, myself find discomfort or I'm trying to figure out where I sit with that, so how have you navigated with that? Has there been complications, has it been easy? I think young people are more comfortable with that nomenclature and if Millennials are going to start to take leadership roles, there may still be

Gen-Xers that might be at an uncomfortable place with it. So I'm just wondering, have you experienced that yet or had complications with that or maybe some kind of connections or something like that?

>> Carolyn Chou: So I think, you know, there is a lot of conversation around the term people of color in general and where it is useful and where it is not useful, right, and what it erases. Within the Asian community, we talk about that with the term Asian American and where it is useful and how it builds solidarity and where it erases specific experiences, right. So within workplaces to just use "people of color" erases anti-blackness and certain key pieces of the way, you know, race plays out and — sorry, how white supremacy and racism plays out in all parts of our lives and in the structures we are trying to dismantle. So I think, I guess to me it is about how do we create a framework of people of color that is about building shared struggle and shared empathy, but not overusing the term when we actually mean something more specific, let's name it, right. If it is all Asian folks in the room, it is not people of color space. That's just not what it is, so I don't think it is use to feel use the term people of color to make ourselves feel better about what a room looks better or a space, but how can it be a term around creating solidarity and so, I don't know, that is a broader answer, but I think it plays into if there are a lot of people of color in the organization, but there are no black folks, you know, that is a problem and that is a problem of white supremacy and racism. And we can't so of we are this percentage of people of color so it is fine. I work for an organization that is for and by Asian American folks, so our organization is different, but within the broader spheres we are in, so how do we use that term in a useful way, but not just use it to kind of say oh, OK, it is people of color space.

>>Kendra Hicks: I think for me and this is my racial equity hat going on in the moment, is I'm from the Dominican Republic and that is something I struggle with my people all of the time. And so I think about it being what you were saying about being empathetic is one, it's not our job to get them to identify how we want them to identify. If they don't identify as a person of color, that's fine, but I'm sure that if I speak to somebody else who is from the Caribbean or Latin America, even if they don't identify of a person of color, there is a shared experience. So they don't have to identify that way, or like, speak the social justice lingo to understand where we are. So I think that in a lot of places, we want people to use the words intersectionality and race and white supremacy, even if they have an understanding of them and they just don't use those terms, and so, one, right, removing that responsibility of like oh, my God, how do you not identify as a person of color, but then also racial identity development is like a developmental scale, so when you start thinking about understanding people's racial identity development, you understand that this person is in this place in the racial identity development and that's fine. Everybody is where they are and eventually, they will move across the spectrum at some point, maybe they won't and that that's OK, too, so more aligning our work on shared experiences and less on the literal jargon of social justice. You're not saying you're intersectional black feminist but, right this and this and that, but people are where they are. People are where they are in their racial identity development. Not everyone uses the same language that we use and it is not our responsibility to get people to move along.

>> Yep, so Kendra is available for consulting and she is really good so thank you for that. So we have one final, final, final question and one final response, so grand finale and I will

close us up really fast because there are snacks and relationship building and networking happening next. Go ahead and introduce yourself.

>> I am Natalia. I work in the fitness sector, so Shavel'le, I would love to talk to you later. Am I heard?

>> Yolanda Coentro: Yep.

>> My question coming from a clearly white person, how do we build a healthy working connection between all races, because I often find myself in a situation where I'm excluded because I'm not part of people of color. You are not a black person. You are not an Asian person. I'm with a privilege that I did not ask for, that I was born with a white skin that I did not ask for. I do come from another country and I am short and I am female, which is also a certain category. But my question is, how do we build these connections that we don't exclude each other and we're not walking on eggshells around each other and the same time elevating each other?

>> So building connections and bridging across difference, what are your thoughts on how to do that? Kendra? Go ahead, Shavel'le.

>> Shavel'le Olivier: I'll just share a story. We had a young man who graduated from Harvard School of Public Health and he was white. He came to the Farmers' Market and he was like I want to do some research here. He wanted to study about food insecurity in Mattapan and we're just like oh, no another person who wanted to research Mattapan and what is going to come out of this? He was with us for that year and he came to the Farmers'

Market one time and showed up again and we were like OK and he showed up for the rest of the 12 Saturdays that we had the Farmers' Market. The next year, when the startup was getting good, because he developed a meal kit for food insecurity, he donated some money to our Farmers' Market to help our farmers market manager out and he still came to the Farmers' Market. Even now he is still making those connections with the Farmers' Market Manager. So, for me it is just trust. Right now, if we don't know you, are you trying to do? But if you keep showing up again and again and come with your true self that can help build some connections.

>> Yolanda Coentro: Final word? Do you want to say one more thing? Go ahead.

>> Kendra Hicks: Like my final thought around it is and it might be personal for you in that moment, is that your — there is some work and exploration that needs to be done about the feeling of exclusion, right, particularly in a country where white people and white women are centered, so there might be exploration that you might be able to do about the feeling of exclusion and where that comes from. I don't think it's impossible to build across difference and I think there is work there to be done that you can definitely do that and I think doing work across difference requires us to do our own work and then do the work together, and so based on what you shared, what is coming to me is, how can you explore deeper those feelings of being excluded, particularly when you live in a place where your identity is centered in those moments and what does it bring up for you there are other people when there are other people of different races or different genders having affinity spaces in those places. I think it would be something fruitful to explore.

>> Yolanda Coentro: OK, so it is my job to, first wrap us up and thank the panel of brilliant leaders. [APPLAUSE] They are leading the way in Boston. I hope we see many more of you leading the way of Boston and helping each other build the path that way. Thank you so much for coming tonight and engaging and sharing your ideas and also your questions and I hope you hang out and get to know each other a bit, so we can leverage each other and rise. So thank you.

>> Elijah Evans: Thank you, guys. [APPLAUSE]