

Change Agents in the American South

Design Team Meeting

Saturday, October 28, 2006
Southern Education Foundation
Atlanta, Georgia

Invitees:

William Buster	Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, Winston-Salem, NC
Lynn Huntley, Esq.	Southern Education Foundation, Atlanta, GA
Quinn Gentry, Ph.D.	Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA
Lavastian Glenn	Neighbors for Better Neighborhoods, Winston-Salem, NC
Natalie Hernandez	National Council of La Raza, Atlanta, GA
Janine Lee	Arthur M. Blank Foundation, Inc., Atlanta, GA
Kelly Lewis, Ph.D.	Emory University/KMLewis Consulting, Inc., Atlanta, GA
Atiba Mbiwan	The Zeist Foundation, Inc., Atlanta, GA
Cara Page	Deeper Waters Consulting, Atlanta, GA
Dwayne Patterson	Huntington's Disease Society of America, Atlanta, GA
Nathaniel Smith	Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership, Inc., Atlanta, GA
Angelicque Tucker-Blackmon, Ph.D.	National Science Foundation
Patricia Turner	Turner Consulting, Atlanta, GA
Lauren Veasey	Southern Education Foundation, Atlanta, GA
Charles Walker	United Way Atlanta, Atlanta, GA
Erika Williams	Anne E. Casey Foundation, Atlanta GA
Gary Wright	Wright Consulting Group, Atlanta, GA

Project Staff:

Omisade Burney-Scott	Project Co-Director, CAAS/Ananse Consulting, Durham, NC
Milano Harden	Project Co-Director, CAAS/The Genius Group, Inc., Atlanta, GA
Tracey Greene-Dorsett	National Rural Funders Collaborative, Charlotte, NC
Terri Laws	Program Associate, CAAS/The Genius Group, Inc., Atlanta, GA

AGENDA

<p>Change Agents in the American South Design Team Meeting Atlanta, Georgia</p> <p><i>Project Purpose</i> <i>Meeting Goals</i> <i>Convening Elements</i></p>	<p>Project Purpose: The <i>Change Agents in the American South</i> (CAAS) project is a multi-phase effort to accelerate racial and social equity outcomes in the American South by better understanding and then serving the leadership development, career support and mentorship needs of early and mid-career change agents of color (ages 25-40) working in southern grassroots communities, organized philanthropy and philanthropic support organizations.</p> <p>Meeting Goals: The CAAS Design Team meeting in Atlanta seeks to create a basic learning design for convening change agents of color in various southern cities (i.e. Raleigh-Durham; Gulf Region; Charleston, SC; Jackson, MS; etc.) over the next several years. While this design will be necessarily deepened by the specific convening city/region's particular community's context, and modified by the specific insights we gain from learning with change agents over time, it will serve as the basic intellectual architecture for the project learning and engagement with these next generation leaders.</p>
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Ideally, the design will combine three types of insights:

1. clarity about what change agents want and needs in terms of leadership development, career support and mentorship;
2. cutting-edge perspectives on how race, place, generation and sector shape their career experiences working for social change/racial equity outcomes; and
3. powerful adult learning and engagement strategies that keep change agents' voices, viewpoints and experiences central while also welcoming cross-generation advisors' wisdom and perspective(s). Special emphasis on strategies that rely on dialogue, narrative (story-telling), non-hierarchical sharing, group interaction and reflection.

Convening Elements:

Ideally, the CAAS Project Team will partner with a sponsoring/host organization to anchor its work in a particular city/region and move through the following steps for a successful convening:

PRE-CONVENING ELEMENTS

CAAS project team will:

1. identify and establish contact with a core support/workgroup of local Change Agent Partners and Cross-Generation advisors responsible for key tasks such as helping to secure a convening site, outreach and recruitment of other change agents participants; raising modest local financial and in-kind support to cover the costs of convening, ensure the participation of individuals working in settings with little professional development funds and other material costs.
2. work with core a workgroup to clarify a participation strategy for participants consistent with CAAS project assumptions.
3. support of any pre-meeting learning/engagement activities (i.e. key information on local/regional context and history, biographical information from change agent participants, key informant interviews, etc.)
4. work with local partners to select of Conversation Catalysts (i.e. individuals who will share bits of important content to contextualize change agents' stories relative to race, place, generation and/or sector).

CAAS project team will connect with evaluators to determine an accessible evaluation process for the Co-Design process and the convening.

CONVENING ELEMENTS

1. Primer on Leadership & Change
2. Pre-Work Assignments (taking into account different preferred ways of communicating)

Readings/Reflection

Short Writing

Spoken Word/Poetry

3. Actual Convening Design

Reception/Dinner

Meeting

Changing Together – Strategies for Staying Connected Locally and Regionally

POST-CONVENING ELEMENTS

Post-Experience Activities (i.e. brief reflection memos, conference calls, local group creating their own learning and support formats)

Recruit CAAS Participants to share with Milano & Omi at key conferences (Leadership Learning Community, Southeastern Council of Foundations, Council of Foundations, etc.)

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<p><i>Your Role as a Co-Designer</i></p> <p><i>Key Learning Questions for Co-Design Process</i></p>	<p>Your Role as a Co-Designer.</p> <p>As a co-designer, the CAAS project team will rely on your experience as a change agent - your sense of the kinds of support(s) that would deepen and strengthen your practice, and the specific barriers relative to race, place, generation and sector you have confronted in your social change work.</p> <p>We will rely on your wisdom and instincts to shape the basic elements of this learning-engagement experience. Therefore, we are especially interested in powerful learning experiences that have supported - your leadership effectiveness, your effective working with supervisors and colleagues across differences (i.e. race, class and gender). We would also like to appreciate the places you go for sanctuary and respite; and the challenges you experience as “bigger than you” (i.e. structural and pervasive) in the American South.</p> <p>Practically, we would like you to contribute salient content and powerful learning techniques. These could be in the form of articles, books, multi-media art that have helped you grow and learn across differences. Lastly, we will need your help identifying and recruiting other change agents who might benefit from this experience.</p> <p>Key Learning Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What priorities do change agents (of color) working the American South have regarding leadership development, personal agency building, mentorship and career support? 2. What supportive practices matter most to enhance the quality of work relationships between change agents of color and their supervisors (particularly when these are cross-race relationships)? What features are essential in an organizational environment to nurture change agents’ leadership and career growth? What leadership and institutional practices accelerate and support social justice, racial equity and community change? 3. What challenges and opportunities do change agents of color experience working on social change, social justice and equity themes in the American South? How could these barriers be minimized and bridges be built or strengthened? 4. How might change agents’ supervisors and home organizations better support their leadership development and career growth? How to take type of organization into account (i.e. grassroots/community organizations, private foundations, technical assistance providers/intermediaries or philanthropic support organizations).
<p><i>Sample Convening Agenda</i></p>	<p>10:00 am Welcome</p> <p>Lynn Walker Huntley, President, Southern Education Foundation</p> <p>Omisade Burney-Scott & Milano Harden, Project Co-Directors</p> <p>10:10 am – 10:40 am Introductions & Icebreaker</p> <p>10:40 am – 11:40 am Project and Pedagogy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Review of Agenda items II. Brief Review of Project Description: Question & Answers

Which Change Agents

Generation

- 25-40, Generation X, Y
- Cross generation advisors
- Cross sector – company folks who are *progressive thinkers*

Race (*Starting points for multi-ethnic [complexity]*)

- Various ethnic-racial groups including, but not limited – African American, Latino American, Native Americans, and Asian Americans, immigrants
- Possibly just African Americans and Latino Americans

Place

- Individuals in the 11 states of the American South – especially grassroot communities, organized philanthropy and philanthropic support organizations

Personal Characteristics

- A social analysis
- A vision and strategy for change
- Bridging social capital
- Commitments to cultural or social identity groups
- Sense of urgency about change

Toolbox

What tools do we already have

- Meeting space
- People resources
- Key and creative assets (to accelerate its process)
- Process for surfacing tools and assets

Build-in people who can give us credibility (being strategic about allies building)

Value added, new info, frameworks

What's around the corner?, the vision (emergent)

What can we create together

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Connection: How to use the lessons, relationships to influence usual or unusual change agents

How to lift up our young, white progressives to leverage those relationships for greater change and impact

(Possibilities) Focused efforts: comparative studies like and like; then cross-pollinization (e.g)

- Low wealth
- Grassroots
- Philanthropic
- Non-profit
- All African American
- All Latino

III. Framing the Atlanta Gathering.

IV. Offer pedagogy options that emphasize voice, narrative, experience and connection for design framework.

11:45 am. – 12:30 pm **Working Lunch!**

Product Development and Design

Extras: Marketing, communications, messaging, benefits from participation

Relationship/Reputation Capital to draw change agents

Creating a community space for people can come together as human beings

Pedagogies

Attention to Place

Samsonite exercise – Bring a piece of Samsonite luggage

A reception

Race, Place, Language. Ground Rules: What is a safe space?

Translation/*Lost in Translation*

Caucusing as a tool in the room

What are you working to change? (to surface values)

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and principles that guide us)

Outcome/Goal: How to bring CAAS into community

Strategy: Pre-work/Reading

- React to research and info
- Reflection on the (1) changes they are working on (2) *incomplete thought*

How to get people into the room to see people heart-to-heart:

- Music – play a connecting role, sing in Native language
- Dance – Spoken word, Dancing
- Film, Movies, Books
 - Strong shoulders standing on
 - E.g.s about how their voice made a difference
 - Southern symbols/altar

Framing for our vantage point the importance of broader human values (our sameness, our differences)

Conciemiento Exercise

- Name
- Family history /ancestry
- Role modes /inspiration
- Legacy

PEDAGOGIES IN ACTION

(at the convening)

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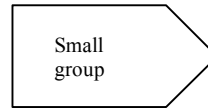
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	<p>Who are you? Who are we? What do you/we bring? Whose vision are you? (historical context) Who claims you?</p>	<p>What's happening to/though/for you? For your work/through your work (external and internal swamp) Context for what is happening</p>	<p>What do you want to happen/How do you want to be involved? (owning this process)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Good things</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Good things</p>	
<p>Bridging Question: what brought you into the work? Barriers that thwart or retard your work?</p>			
<p>Goals: To be a community</p>	<p>Wholeness is the constant What does take/mean for me to be whole at work?</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Community – Closing Ceremony</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Viv Viv – combined water from different places to nurture one plant</p> <p><u>Core Commitments/Principles (10 or less)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are going to act of good character • Signature of 10 core commitments • We agree to support each other <p>Use the word power liberally and generously (new language, new reality)</p>			

“In It”

e.g. Breakdowns/Breakthroughs

- Harm
- Healing



- Acceptance
- Strength

In this work:

- What cope with external and internal
- How do I navigate this?
- Acknowledging experiences (real / painful)

“Critical Incident”

Create a set of dialogue and reflection opportunities (anchored into optimism and hope)

1. Why did you get into this business anyway?
[Reflection/Dialogue]
2. What are the barriers that are keeping you from realizing the full contribution [Realities I deal with]
3. When was it a time or experience when your voice made a difference [Critical incident: opportunities to realize your voice]

“Good Things” Exercise

- What’s good now
- What’s good

Conflict Resolution Models/Tools

Home remedy that works that you can pass down

How we heal ourselves [CAAS outcome/goal]

We are often working/living in adversity, how do we create home remedies?

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Work As "Purification"

PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE (how do we sustain you over time?)
Vocabulary words	Vocabulary words	Vocabulary words

Wholeness: What do I need to be "whole at/in my work?"

Accelerating what needs to change (my work in the American South)

12:30 pm – 1:00 pm "**Facilitator's Role and Tasks at the Gathering**"

--Nominations for Local Facilitators

Small team of facilitators, 2 – 4

Role

1. Skilled at refereeing/traffic cop – people can say what they feel, parking at the right places in the conversation and lifts up insights/wisdom
2. Model language, use examples
3. Task – dry run
4. Clear instructions/inputs
5. Who is in the room – how individuals have realized social justice (bios read)

Recruitment

- Connections and bridgers
- People associated in leadership

1:00 pm. – 1:30 pm **Content & Conversation Catalyst(s)**

Conversation Catalyst [LEAN FORWARD]

Internalizers – Externalizers

Real change – how does it happen?

- Through people
- Through organizations

Checklist of values

- What do my current values/new values mean?

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- How does my new view on power?

Media Presentation: Film: *Crash, They Live, Raisin in the Sun, Drop Squad*

Person: e.g. Older Activists (sense of history and perspective) such as Marion W.

Music

- from different eras
- social commentary

Positive

- level of sincerity in the room and
- level of impatience/urgency
- recognition that this leadership ? is bigger than us
- value of deliberative process – no one of us know what the majority knows
- keeping conversation fresh and open
- recognition that there are so many dynamics that leads to a journey of exploration and discovery
- awareness and consciousness connectivity
- articulation and written expression is well done
- commitment to time, stay engaged, to go deeper
- going from practice to theory
- racial pride!
- Intellectual capital in the room
- Affirmation of timing and work! (Divine)
- Acknowledgment of elders and ancestors (new leaders sanctioned by elder community to go out and do the work)

Questions that remain

- Have we thought about individual donor? (smart marketing, access, supplies, documentation; “friend” givers/house parties/receptions)
- When do we want to go with community foundations? (for local gatherings)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to connect this work to a larger philanthropic effort (M. Casey, OSI, A.E. Casey, Ford, Mott, Kellogg, etc.)? Fit organizing rubric, could pull from their grantees*** • How do we connect with the “not” usual suspects - corporate sector, board development opportunity? • How do we connect with larger more traditional civil rights organizations? • How do we think about (including) HBCU’s – students • How do we get “sponsored” - to do this work in university leadership development programs <p>1:30 pm – 2:15 pm Documentation & Debriefing Strategies</p> <p>2:15 pm – 2:40 pm Invitee list for Atlanta gathering</p> <p>2:40 - 3:00 pm. Reflections/Feedback on the Today’s Design Meeting</p>

Where to put this:

Dream a World?

Change a World?

- Beloved Community
- Confession Booth with the empowerment of the whole process
- Natalie Bullock Brown
 - Interviewers why do you give?
 - What do you hope will happen?

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