

**Tod@s SOMOS Líderes: CULTIVATING GRASSROOTS LEADERS IN MAYFAIR  
An Ethnographic-based Evaluation and Curriculum Notes of  
A Grassroots Leadership Program Serving Spanish-speaking Women in East San José**

**A Project Report**

**Presented to**

**The Faculty of the Department of Anthropology**

**San José State University**

**In Partial Fulfillment**

**of the Requirements for the Degree**

**Master of Arts**

**by**

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## ABSTRACT

Qualitative evaluation has gained popularity as a method of evaluating programs and planning for the future. Particularly with programs that include multiple stakeholders, qualitative evaluation allows for diverse participants' voices to be recognized and for input to flow in multiple directions. Copeland-Carson (2005) recognizes qualitative evaluation as an emerging subfield specializing in community development, operating under new paradigms and creating career opportunities for anthropologists. Her vision of evaluation anthropology pushes beyond the use of anthropology to solve evaluation problems to a role in the development of knowledge of contemporary culture and society that can add to scholarly discussions. I partnered with Somos Mayfair, a grassroots community advocacy organization. Through the curriculum evaluation of their leadership program, Escuela Siembra, I studied leadership development and the factors that contributed to its success. Ten women, Spanish-speaking mothers, participated in the inaugural leadership training. Based on hours of observation during group training sessions and the one-on-one interviews obtained from the participants after program completion, I was able to recognize key factors to community development, address issues of marginality and identify points of intervention. In this report, I describe the models of leadership development and evaluate the impact of the program on participants' understanding of local issues. In documenting the program, I include responses from participants obtained through interviews, interactions, and written program exercises. Additionally, I include recommendations for implementing similar leadership development programs and some reflections on doing this work.

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

The Undersigned Graduate Committee Approves the Project Report Titled


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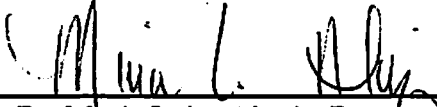
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“I write for those who cannot read me.”

—Eduardo Galeano, *The Book of Embraces*

This report is dedicated to the many women who refuse to sit idle amidst injustice. These women, mothers mainly, manage multiple priorities to ensure a better future for their children and families. Despite the abuse and oppression, these women continue to dream a better future. *Este reporte está dedicado a múltiples mujeres que resisten y luchan contra injusticias. Estas mujeres, la mayoría mamás, que manejan varias prioridades y se dedican a crear un futuro mejor para sus hijos y sus familias. A pesar de abuso y opresión, estas mujeres continúan a soñar un futuro mejor.*

I am extremely grateful for all who have supported me in this process. I thank my committee chair Dr. Jan English-Lueck for her constant feedback and support. *Mil gracias a los miembros de mi comité, la Dra. María Alaníz y el Dr. Roberto González por su apoyo y motivación en este esfuerzo.* Also, I would like to acknowledge my colleagues and friends for continuously walking with me on this journey, especially Maria Alderete, Cathy Avila-Linn, Nadinne Cruz, Kathleen Rice and Mayra Cerda.

I would like to acknowledge the tremendous support from my family. I give thanks to my partner Lisa M. Willmes for her countless messages of encouragement. I am grateful for my parents, Teresa and Rogelio Martinez, for instilling in me a strong commitment to education, community and justice since childhood. I am indebted to their labor of love. I thank my sisters, Marisol and Marina Martinez, for their constant belief in me. Lastly, I would like to thank my brother-in-law Jonathan L. Fonken for his unwavering technical support and assistance throughout my graduate experience.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In 2010, I agreed to do an ethnographic evaluation of the Escuela Siembra leadership development training (cited as ES for the purpose of this report) for Somos Mayfair (cited as SOMOS). At the time of the invitation, SOMOS was exploring ways it could effectively train leaders to be deeply engaged in specific programs while having a broad understanding of the work done by the organization. SOMOS staff members were particularly interested in 1) capturing ways to engage participants in conversations around leadership and local issues and 2) documenting responses from participants that reflect their engagement in the organization. Qualitative evaluation allows for diverse participants' voices to be recognized and for input to flow in multiple directions, particularly with programs that include multiple stakeholders. Copeland-Carson (2005) recognizes qualitative evaluation as an emerging subfield specializing in community development, operating under new paradigms and creating career opportunities for anthropologists. Qualitative evaluation has gained popularity as a method of evaluating programs and planning for the future.

### **SOMOS MAYFAIR**

Somos Mayfair is a grassroots organization providing resources to residents in the Mayfair neighborhood. The Mayfair neighborhood is located in East San Jose near a highly frequented area for Latino residents, mainly immigrants. SOMOS distributes its work among three main areas: health promotion, cultural activism, and community organizing. SOMOS is a medium size organization with twelve full time employees working on projects that promote community engagement, family support, and civic

action with a special focus on electoral participation.

## **PARTICIPANTS**

A total of ten participants completed the six-session leadership-development training program offered by SOMOS. Participants were women living in areas of East San Jose and neighborhoods in Milpitas. All participants, except for one, were mothers of young children. All participants were born in Mexico, with limited English-language skills and preferred to interact in Spanish.

## **CURRICULUM**

The curriculum for the program was designed to focus on five main goals. The goals included understanding the SOMOS mission and identifying core areas of involvement with the organization. As part of gaining leadership skills, participants explored their identities and engaged in social analysis of power, health, and early education success. Through the sessions, participants were encouraged to create change in the community.

ES primarily used popular education as a methodology, integrating social justice concepts and theater-based activities. All sessions were conducted in Spanish. Lessons included energizing *chispas* (ice-breakers) and group discussions as well as lecture-style segments to teach new concepts. After each session, participants completed a session evaluation and were given assignments to complete at home. These assignments were due at the following meeting. During the sessions, childcare and meals were provided to all participants at the program site.

As part of this project report, I document all program activities and share notes on

how to address the program goals better. In Chapter 1, I give detailed information about the organizational structure and program model of Somos Mayfair, including its history and development to-date. Also, I describe the community surrounding SOMOS as well as the issues and circumstance relevant to understanding the lived realities of the participants in their programs.

Chapter 2 gives an overview of the ES program and presents the rationale SOMOS employed to launch a more intentional leadership-development training program. This chapter includes the participant selection process for the program as well as the strategic goals and the theoretical foundation for the training.

Chapter 3 focuses on the need for ethnographic-based evaluation and the way that applied anthropologists can have an impact on program development. I describe the methods used to capture the data for evaluating the ES program in its multiple phases.

In Chapter 4, I discuss the curriculum used for the training sessions. Here, I present the overall session model and components for a social justice-based program. For each session, I present the agenda for the day with brief descriptions of activities and lessons, highlighting the well-received activities, and identify areas needing improvement. Following each session summary, I present alternative, supplemental, or auxiliary activities and notes for future sessions. I address salient points of the specific session and identify actionable steps for improvement. Issues are addressed in the session in which they first appear or in the session in which its repeated presence affects the learning environment.

I provide evaluation results from the program in Chapter 5. In this chapter, I

examine areas related to the overall effect of the program, and explore issues of community development and marginality. Also, I include a brief discussion on social networks. Building on the evaluation given in the previous chapter, Chapter 6 includes my reflections on the ES program and the participants. In that section, I share questions to consider for future research.

In closing, I address the importance of the development of women leaders, especially in marginalized communities.



## **CHAPTER 1: GETTING TO KNOW SOMOS MAYFAIR**

What has happened at Mayfair is more than anyone could have imagined... It is an affirmation of the resiliency of poor people and about the depths of what they are capable of. Mayfair has given the larger world an understanding of people...who had been seen as irrelevant, ignored; this was in invisible community that did not have a great deal of value put on it. But given the support, given the belief in their capacity, they could do it.

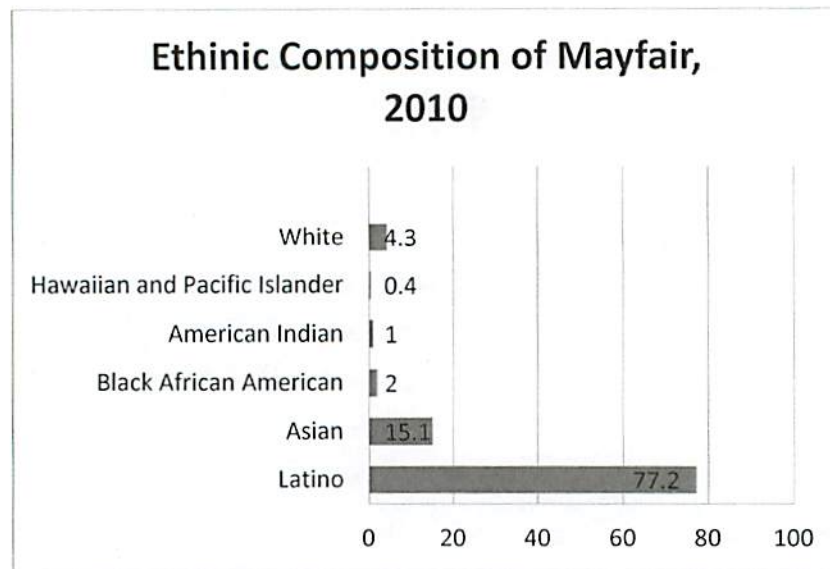
—Blanca Alvarado, retired Santa Clara  
County Supervisor (Berger 2006: i)

Somos Mayfair began as Mayfair Improvement Initiative (MII), a grant funded by the Flora and Hewlett Foundation in 1996. The main charge of the work was centered on the first Mayfair Strategic Plan for Community Transformation that included over seventy-six community projects. These projects were as diverse as the neighborhood demographics. The projects ranged from beautification projects to adult education and included health promotion, computer academies, children's health, sidewalk repairs and school readiness (Berger 2006). Several articles and documents have been published about the area. They include information on the origins of the organization and its programs (Bauen 2009; Berger 2006; Building Movement 2009; City of San Jose 2011; Moriarty 2006; Shell and Bauen 2008; and Shell 2008a, 2008b).

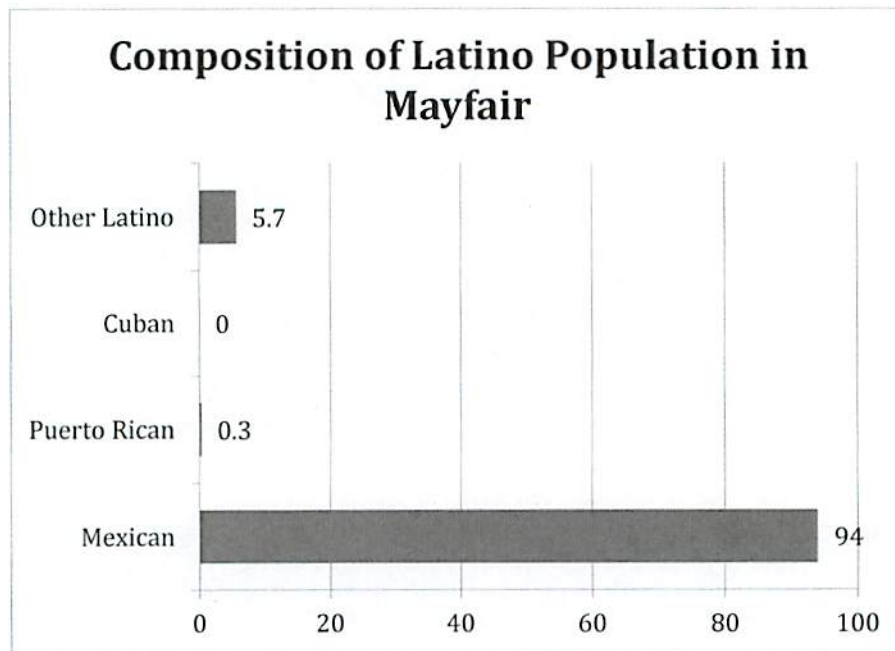
The MII built a strong foundation for community outreach on the deep history of community capital in the area. According to long-time community ethnographer and historian Renee A. Berger (2006), Mexican immigrant families dating back to the 1920s have been cultivating a sense of community. For several years, Mayfair has been a stable core area for engaged community renewal. In the 1940s, community organizing projects thrived, advocating better conditions for workers in the fields and the canneries as well as

fighting discriminatory practices against Latinos. The community also has benefited from the long-standing economic and social justice agenda of the local Catholic parish, Our Lady of Guadalupe. This church worked with local resident Cesar E. Chavez for transformative civil rights and labor reform. Thus, community justice work is part of Mayfair's neighborhood social fabric.

Today, the Mayfair community is still primarily a Latino (77.2%), immigrant enclave with growing numbers of Asian residents (15.15%), specifically Filipino (4.6%) and Vietnamese (6.3%) (US Census Bureau, 2010 Census). This neighborhood is located near the bustling intersection of Story and King Road, a historic area of Mexican businesses and community services centers. This area has undergone drastic changes. The city has used recent redevelopment funds to refinish building facades, providing a brighter, cleaner and ultimately safer environment. The Mayfair Area has two principal freeways (Highway 280 and Highway 101) that help create its boundaries along with the arterial streets, King Road and San Antonio Street. The area contains a community center, two elementary schools, a middle school and one park, and two community centers.



**Figure 1.** Ethnic breakdown in the Mayfair neighborhood for residents identifying only one race. Those identifying more than one race are not included. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census



**Figure 2.** Latino or Hispanic of any race population breakdown by heritage distinction. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

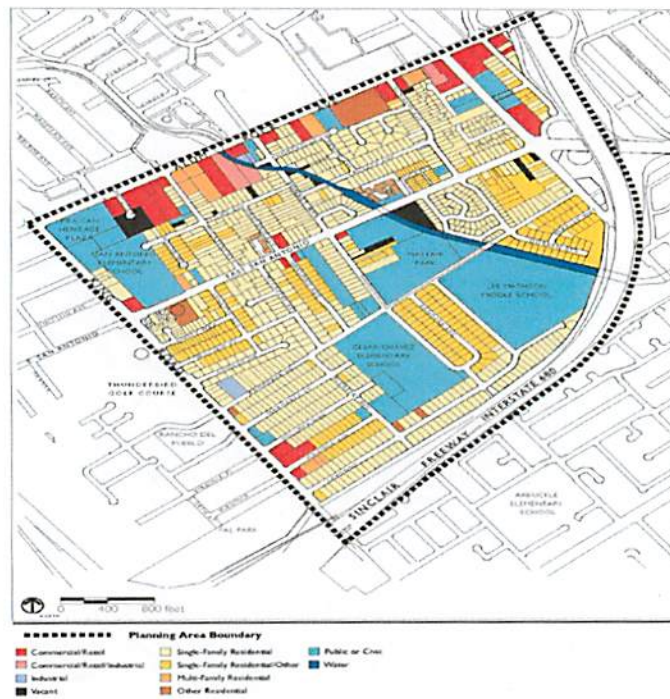
The ethnic make-up of the Mayfair area is predominately Hispanic or Latino, specifically Mexican. The population is almost evenly distributed along gender lines

(48.2% female and 51.8% male). The median age in this neighborhood was 28 years old, with 71% of the population being 16 years or older in 2010 (US Census Bureau, 2010 Census). One third of the population was between the ages of 0 to 19 years old, approximately 1,734 minors.

According to 2009 City Data (<http://www.city-data.com/neighborhood/Mayfair-San-Jose-CA.html>), the population density in this area was 11,253 people per square mile. This number is more than double that of the San Jose density average of 5,118 per people per square mile. In 2010, Mayfair had a total of 969 households. Of these households, 59.4% were renter-occupied housing units. This meant that the residents of this neighborhood experienced a more crowded living arrangement than most other residents in the San Jose. Additionally, since a majority of the homes are rented, this neighborhood experiences high mobility rates. Of the families living in this area who own their own homes (40%), the majority (81%) are indebted with home mortgages. The median value of homes in this neighborhood is \$457, 600 (US Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey). Only a few (7%) of owner-occupied homes are owned debt-free.

According to the 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5- year Estimates, approximately a quarter of the households experienced poverty status in the past 12 months. As poverty status and income levels are associated with educational attainment, it is not surprising that only 15.3% of the population 25 years or older has a bachelor's degree or higher. However, a significant percentage of this same age group did have a high school degree or higher, 58.3%. Of the population 25 years old or over with earnings

to report, the median earnings in the past twelve months from the census data was \$25,169. Yet, the median earning for those with less than a high school degree was \$15,685. In the city of San Jose, the median household income for that same year was \$79,405 and the state median household income was \$60,883 (US Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts). The income levels in the Mayfair neighborhood were significantly lower than local and regional averages.



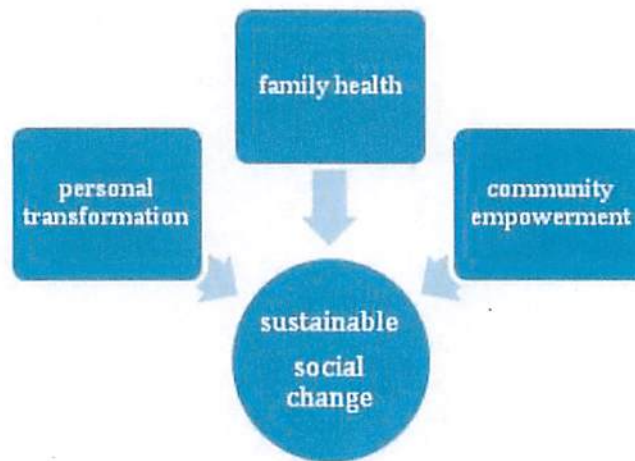
*Figure 3. Map of Mayfair as designated by the City of San Jose Strong Neighborhood Initiative and modified for Neighborhood Planning Report. (See City Planning Division.)*

The organization's new mission statement reads,

Somos Mayfair cultivates the dreams and power of the people of Mayfair through cultural activism, social services and community organizing. We are generations of immigrants, rooted in a vibrant community, who nurture healthy families and speak out for justice in Silicon Valley" ("Somos Mayfair website" n.d.).

The cultural activism done by SOMOS was primarily the vision of program director

Arturo Gomez. Mr. Gomez has been working with community groups for decades using popular theatre to unpack complex societal issues. Mayfair theatrical productions included shows such as “La Pastorela y Posada,” a nativity story following traditional Mexican holiday rituals yet infused with contemporary issues of immigration, wellness and the economy. Building on culturally relevant celebrations, cultural activists encouraged future generations to continue with traditions while exposing the entire community to larger societal issues. Using cultural activities as a backdrop, cultural workers present complex and unfamiliar concepts to community the audiences. The values embedded in organization’s mission statement were reflected in multiple programs that promoted cultural traditions and affirmed community development.



**Figure 4.** *Somos Mayfair’s view of social change aspects. Source: Somos Mayfair Strategic plan 2008-2011*

The organization’s social services ranged from services to individuals and services to families. Funded largely from First 5 California grant monies, the organization supported families with children ages 0-5 years. SOMOS provided services to individuals in the form of support groups, referrals to legal services, health care programs, ESL and



GED classes, housing support and emergency food and shelter. *Promotoras* (peer health educators) were responsible for the bulk of the social services programs offered by SOMOS. Promotoras met with families in the community and provided specialized coaching in early education success and healthy living. Promotoras often were the first point of contact with residents in the Mayfair area who then encourage these families to find further support through other SOMOS' programs.

The last core area of work done by SOMOS was through the community organizing committee. The organization's civic action projects include mobilizing residents to advocate for more affordable housing, participating in countywide immigration reform, launching voter registration drives, and promoting immigrant vote campaigns to impact election results. Additionally, SOMOS has produced voter guides, endorsing community-friendly propositions. SOMOS' most recent policy work has been focused on healthy living conditions for residents. SOMOS successfully advocated for the reopening of a community center as a hub for youth activities and adult education. At the time, SOMOS was working on ways to impact eating habits of school-age children by demanding healthier in-school lunch programs.

In 2009, the organization began to build programs influenced by the strategic planning process of the previous year. As a result, the organization decided to pay more attention to the ways that it intentionally built power within the community, including local leadership development and community coalition building. The ES leadership development project was the first experimental program designed to develop a community power-building model for Somos Mayfair. It would train volunteers to be

effective community leaders.

In light of a charged political backdrop, the organization pushed for intentional community leadership development. From the deterioration of Sanctuary City ordinances to Arizona's SB1070 and other related policies, the effects of the legislation primarily target Latinos (SB 1070; Mok 2011; Sanchez 20110). At the same time, the Silicon Valley, as well as other communities in the US, were experiencing economic turmoil with high unemployment rates and an increase of homes in foreclosure. Community organizations such as SOMOS were feeling the brunt of these financial challenges with fewer funding sources available. The organization anticipated budget cuts and implemented voluntary staff furloughs.

Despite the challenges, SOMOS continued to strive for community power. The staff members hoped that ES project would create the needed base of strong leaders to continue the work in challenging times.



## **CHAPTER 2: PROJECT OVERVIEW**

In December 2009, I met with SOMOS staff members to establish the project timeline. Through conversations in early spring 2010, we agreed on the scope of the work and identified the key components of the project. Two SOMOS staff members worked with me on this project. Aryeh Shell, program coordinator, with the support of program director Arturo Gomez designed the ES program.

Aryeh Shell had a Masters of Arts degree in Education with a concentration in equity and social justice in education from San Francisco State University. She was the founder of the Herstories Project, a collective seeking to cultivate social transformation by sharing knowledge from elders and bringing women's voices to the foreground. Ms. Shell had been a member of many organizations including Direct Action to Stop the War, Art and Revolution, and the Institute for Deep Ecology. She had conducted international workshops on anti-racism strategies, arts activism, street theatre, and giant puppetry. Arturo Gomez earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art from the University of Mexico and studied theater at the National School of Drama in Mexico. Mr. Gomez had been working with community groups since the late 1960's on cultural and labor issues. He worked with El Teatro Campesino, a theater company whose work was closely linked to the work of the United Farm Workers Union. Mr. Gomez also worked as a community organizer with the Mexican Electricians and the National Agricultural Workers Union in Mexico. His extensive background in theater significantly informed the decision to include popular theater in Somos Mayfair's program methodology. In addition to the two key

staff members assigned to the development and implementation of the training program, all other SOMOS staff members were asked to refer and invite individuals to participate in the inaugural ES cohort.

For the purpose of this report, I describe the process, methods, and observations of the programs in four phases. Phase I includes the pre-program interview. Phase II covers both the curriculum and ES session planning. Phase III includes discussion about the curriculum notes. Phase IV focuses on the post-program interviews and the network mapping exercise. Although the activities overlapped in their practice, I believe categorizing in this manner adds distinction to the components of the ES program and the evaluation.

#### Phase I: Pre-program Interviews

The preparation for the ES pilot project began in January 2010. Aryeh Shell and I met to discuss the overview of the project and review the findings from the case study of SOMOS done by the Building Movement Project (2009). Ms. Shell noted that the organization would like to break down program silos by having an introductory session for new and emerging leaders to acquire new skills, learn more about the work being done by the organization in general and to serve as a support network for involved residents. Since we knew that this pilot project would serve as a learning model for future training programs, we set in place structures that would ensure a committed pool of participants.

Staff at SOMOS invited participants from each of the core areas of work; cultural activism group Familias Unidas, Promotoras de Salud health educators and support group

members, and the community organizing committee. Staff coordinators heading these areas made announcements to the entire group and followed up with individuals who expressed interest. Interested participants then secured a pre-program interview with Ms. Shell. Nineteen participants signed up for an interview.

During the interview, participants shared basic demographic information, gave reflections of themselves as leaders, and identified their anticipated learning goals for the program. We used the demographic information for logistical purposes such as securing the adequate counts for meals and levels of child care support throughout the training sessions.

In the interviews, participants were asked the following questions.

1. How did you find out about the Escuela Siembra?
2. Why do you want to participate?
3. What do you want to learn and obtain from this training?
4. How involved have you been in the community? In what programs or groups have you participated?
5. Do you identify as a leader?

Ms. Shell conducted the interviews with all participants in Spanish. Ms. Shell used the pre-program interviews as an opportunity to explain the objectives of the program and make explicit the expectations of the participants. I was introduced to the participants as a non-staff member that would be supporting the program sessions. I observed and took notes during these interviews. Most interviews lasted thirty minutes.

The purpose of the interviews was not to eliminate participants but to 1) get a

clearer sense of potential participants and 2) set the tone of significance and commitment with participants. During the interview, Ms. Shell took the opportunity to share information regarding the additional data collection including my future observations and the exit interview.

In addition to the interview, participants completed an extensive questionnaire that assessed their skills and levels of understanding of the core concepts of leadership, sense of safety, relational building, agency, optimism, and political awareness. Also, participants defined the following terms: leader, power, oppression, and health. Many of the participants found these terms and concepts to be abstract and challenging to describe. Very few interviewees were able to give examples from their daily lives. Participants spent an additional fifteen minutes filling out the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was designed with a rank scale of one to five with one corresponding to “strongly disagree,” three corresponding to “neutral” and five corresponding to “strongly agree.” For example under the heading of “Leadership,” participants were asked to give a ranked response to statements about their participation in a group setting, meetings, and decision making.

*Me siento empoderada a resolver mis propios problemas*

I am empowered and encouraged to solve problems on my own.

*Escucho a los demás antes de tomar una decisión*

I listen to others before making decisions

*Es importante apoyar otros líderes en la comunidad*

It is important to support other community leaders

*Es importante escuchar a personas de distintas experiencias y orígenes*

I think it's important to listen to people from different backgrounds

*Confío en mi capacidad de ser líder*

I am confident in my ability to lead

|  |
|--|
| <i>Yo puede nombrar 3 fuerzas que tengo</i>                            |
| I can name 3 strengths of mine   |
| <i>Soy líder en mi familia</i>   |
| I am a leader in my family   |
| <i>Soy líder en mi comunidad</i>                                       |
| I am a leader in my community  |
| <i>En un grupo me siento segura compartiendo mis ideas y opiniones</i> |
| When I am in a group, I feel comfortable sharing my opinions           |
| <i>Llego a tiempo y preparada a participar</i>                         |
| I arrive on-time and ready to participate                              |

Figure 5. Sample questions from the ES participant survey

Although nineteen participants signed up to be interviewed, only fourteen individuals participated to their assigned interview appointment. Of those fourteen, ten women joined the six-session leadership development-training program offered by SOMOS. Participants were women living in neighborhoods of East San Jose and Milpitas. All participants, except for one, were mothers of young children. All participants were foreign born, specifically from Mexico, with limited English-language acquisition and preferred interacting in Spanish.

Participants' ages ranged from 32 to 45 years old. Most of the women had an average of three children. The women's time in the United States ranged from one year to eighteen years. Yet their time in the Mayfair was significantly shorter for all but two participants. They differed in terms of their identification as current leaders. Some considered themselves leaders at times or in a certain situation while others did not see themselves as leaders. However, all participants expressed an earnest desire to become a leader or improve their existing leadership skills. Table 1 gives a snapshot of the participants who interviewed for the ES program.

Table 1. Overview of Participants

| Participant | Age | Children | Time in the US | Time in Mayfair | Level of Education                       | Are you a leader?   |
|-------------|-----|----------|----------------|-----------------|--|---------------------|
| 1           | 33  | 2        | 1yr            | 1 year          | 6th grade                                | No                  |
| 2           | 35  | 3        | 11yr           | 4 months        | University                               | Yes                 |
| 3           | 40  | 5        | 17yr           | 1 months        | Middle school                            | A little bit        |
| 4           | 41  | 3        | 15yr           | 7 months        | In Mexico                                | A little bit        |
| 5           | 37  | 3        | 1yr            | 1 year          | Vocational school                        | Mexico Yes<br>US No |
| 6           | 37  | 2        | 8 yr           | 1 months        | Middle school                            | Yes                 |
| 7           | 31  | 2        | 1yr            | 1 year          | 9 <sup>th</sup> grade                    | A little bit        |
| 8           | 36  | 3        | 10yr           | 1 year          | Professional                             | No<br>response      |
| 9           | 41  | 2        | 18yr           | 5 months        | 5th grade                                | No                  |
| 10          | 43  | 5        | 11ys           | 3 years         | High School-<br>1/2 yr college<br>Mexico | Yes                 |
| 11          | 45  | 3        | 14yr           | 6 months        | Mexico university<br>IPN                 | Yes                 |
| 12          | 4   | 3        | 11yrs          | 2 years         | 9 <sup>th</sup> grade                    | No                  |
| 13          | 32  | 0        | 13yrs          | 13 years        | High School                              | Yes                 |
| 14          | 38  | 2        | 11yr           | 11 years        | High School                              | At Home             |

During the pre-program interview and early interactions with participants, all the women stated that they sought out programs and services from SOMOS because of the direct benefits these interactions provided to their family. The women were most concerned about their children's well being. Table 2 describes the women's reason for participating in ES.

Table 2. Reasons for Participation

| Comments during pre-program interview<br>Why do you want to participate?   |
|--|
| <i>Mejorar como mamá y persona, criar una nueva generación</i><br>Improve as mother and as a person, to raise a new generation |

|  |
|--|
| <i>Impulsar mas a la comunidad</i><br>Motivate the community   |
| <i>Liderazgo, como poner el "grano de arena"</i><br>Leadership, leave my "grain of sand"   |
| <i>Como seguir adelante como madre soltera: [mis hija]) alimentarlas, educarlas, no quiero quedarse en la casa</i><br>How to advance as a single mother; [(for my children) feed them, educate them; I don't want to stay home |
| <i>Aprender, Mejorarme</i><br>Learn, Improve myself  |
| <i>Saber que puedo mejorar en mi familia y la comunidad</i><br>Know that I can help my family and community  |
| <i>Aprender más como promotora, la salud, conexión con la tierra</i><br>To learn more as a promotora; Health and the connection to the environment   |
| <i>Para que mis niños tengan éxito</i><br>So my children can be successful   |
| <i>Para ayudar a la gente de mi experiencia, romper los mensajes negativos</i><br>To help others through my experience, Break the cycle of negative messages   |
| <i>Ayudar a otras; saber cómo ayudar</i><br>Help others, know how to help  |
| <i>Tener más seguridad del conocimiento, profundizar</i><br>Be more confident in my understanding, deepen  |
| <i>Los temas, desarrollar como líder</i><br>The topics, to develop as a leader   |
| <i>Cambiar de posición, aprender más</i><br>Change in my (social) position, learn more   |
| <i>Aprovechar la oportunidad de aprendizaje</i><br>Take advantage of an opportunity to learn   |

Additionally, the women were interested in the proposed themes and topics. Some women expressed excitement to be a part of a personal development process. All participants underscored the need to keep learning and understood that workshops were a convenient way of acquiring new information.

## **Phase II: Curriculum and Session Planning**

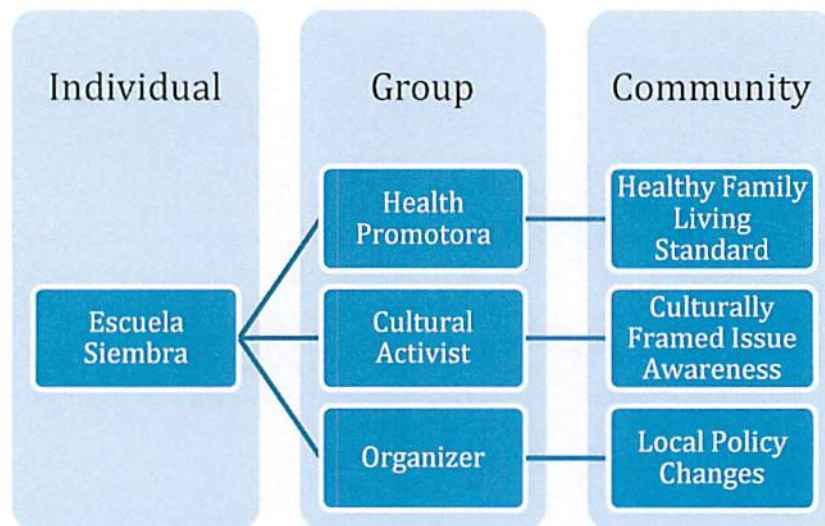
The ES program was a result of findings from the most recent study conducted by the organization. Ms. Shell expressed the strategic goals for ES in our planning meetings. She hoped these sessions would increase participants' understanding of and commitment to the mission and vision of Somos Mayfair. Staff members were also expecting increased participant involvement in current programs. Through the sessions, Ms. Shell anticipated participants becoming aware of the organization's three core competencies: health promotion, cultural activism, and community organizing. Participants would receive the information needed for a basic understanding of power, family health and wellness, and early school success as a first step in engaging in social analysis. While creating the curriculum, Ms. Shell paid particular attention to cultivating an individual sense of agency in participants by focusing primarily on positive self-identity, motivation, and self-efficacy. Additionally, participants were expected to acquire basic leadership skills needed to work with SOMOS programs in the Mayfair neighborhood.

The curriculum for the program was designed to focus on five areas:

1. Understand the Somos Mayfair Mission: Participants share, in their own words, the main objectives of the organization including the overarching vision of community transformation.
2. Identify core areas of involvement in the organization: Participants identify cultural activism through theater, health promotion, and community organizing leading to policy changes as the three core areas of the organization's work.



3. Cultivate self-awareness and agency: Participants explore how they viewed themselves and how others perceived them. They discerned their ability to engage in decision-making processes.
4. Engage in social analysis of power, health, and early education: Participants gain a clear understanding of concepts such as “power- over” and “power-with.” Participants learned key indicators of success and recognized best practices pertaining to health and early education,
5. Gain basic leadership skills: As an introductory leadership training, participants explore their identity as a leader and express their understanding of community-based efforts.



*Figure 6. Logic model for Escuela Siembra derived from conversations with program coordinator Aryeh Shell in 2010*

Ms. Shell was the primary curriculum designer. Ultimately, Ms. Shell decided on the activities and content to include in the curriculum, although she and I discussed the basic elements of the sessions. I supported the lessons during the sessions by serving as

an additional facilitator for small group conversations and at times translating session materials. During the sessions, I observed the lessons. I notated participant reactions and responses. I reported on the successful activities and identified areas that needed further improvement. Mr. Gomez supported the project in the initial two sessions by providing additional commentary that was culturally or contextually relevant to the lesson or activity during the session.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Taking the direction of popular education, the six sessions of ES were amalgamates of content sharing and community-building. The curriculum followed principles of critical pedagogy.

Advocates of critical pedagogy — Henry Giroux (1989, 1992), Bernice Malka Fisher (2001), bell hooks (1994a, 1994b) Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren (1989) and David Trend (1992)— all recognized that (1) students must be actively involved in and responsible for their educational processes and (2) the process is distorted by various social, political, cultural and economic boundaries. According to critical pedagogy paradigm, education should encourage students to think critically, to analyze social conditions, and to evaluate information— particular information related to power, identity, and representation” (Howard 2004: 217).

As critical pedagogy, the curriculum for ES informed participants about the ways that power is displayed in society and their neighborhoods. Also, as immigrant women, the participants were able to understand their place in the larger strata and began to determine a path toward a better future.

Grassroots leaders need to engage in critical reflection of dominant classes and structures of power in order to understand and take action against oppression.

Additionally these ideas must involve participants individually and collectively, toward actualization; they must address the unequal distribution of power. Key authors in

community development and social justice work include Paulo Freire (1986) and Augusto Boal (1979). Freire's pedagogy is widely known as *popular education*. The term *popular* in Latin American denotes the poor and working class. Popular education is rooted in Marxist class critique and places educators as catalysts for change (Bartlett 2005).

Freire proposes that educators should reject the banking model of teaching in which the teacher is the keeper of knowledge who then gives or deposits information in its students. As the alternative, he urges for a dialogue-based and problem-posing method. In this method, the two interact, manage information and arrive at shared meaning. Thus, learning is relational and knowledge is produced in communion with others. Teachers and students must be co-investigators; in that action ties are built toward solidarity. We "cannot think for others or without others" (Freire 1984: 100). The educator must also keep in mind the intentionality of consciousness by not isolating it from the world. Only through constant action and reflection, which Freire refers to as *praxis*, can we be engaged in pedagogy that liberates the oppressed and the oppressor. This type of deep, engaged, and meaningful learning does not happen by chance. This learning is guided by strong feelings of love and an awareness to search for a fight for liberation.

So, "the wall must be torn down" (Boal 1979:100). The strict divide between the teacher and the student must be broken. Boal presents a new tool for personal change and self-understanding through the use of performance. The main objective of the *poetics of oppression* is to tear down the wall and change people from passive spectator to active participants on the stage. This is an exploration of possibilities and a preparation for real

action. Theater as such can be used to facilitate conversations of the sociopolitical process, illustrate a problem and engage the participants in providing solutions. It also serves to change the audience members' opinions and perceptions on a particular issue and ultimately change behaviors on these issues. Each stage provides a new area of intervention for unpacking lived experiences and creating a new reality.

Through the uses of imagery and dialogue, the audience transcends the role of a passive viewer and engages in the larger conversation. "By learning a new language, a person acquires a new way of knowing reality and of passing the knowledge to others" (Boal 1979: 97). Based on this framework, the goal of this project was to change the women's opinion of their own leadership and their ability to create change in their homes and communities.

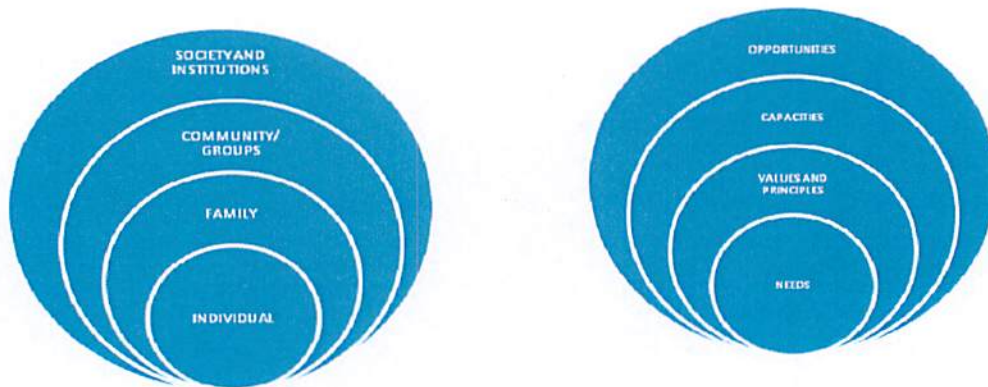


Figure 7. *Areas of Influence and Response.* (See INDELI Highland Research Group 2009.)

Using critical pedagogy, the Instituto para el Desarrollo del Liderazgo Inmigrante, or INDELI, in Spanish, created a similar training model for grassroots leaders for immigrant organizing (Highland Research Educational Group 2009). The report made

explicit the areas of influence of immigrants and the areas in which they could respond (see Figure 7). The INDELI tool is based on a framework created by the School of Unity and Liberation/Movement Strategy Center. The SOUL/MSD framework identifies concrete indicators of change in personal and political development. Some of the indicators included to assess personal transformation included a sense of safety, relationship building, self-esteem and agency, skills building, identity developments, independent critical thinkers, connection to others and the community, and leadership (see Appendix B). Although this project did not use all of the indicators presented in that model, the framework was used as a starting point for curriculum planning of the ES initiative.

### Phase III: Curriculum Notes and Session Feedback

For the curriculum notes and session recommendations, I based my comments on principles of critical pedagogy, the practice of leadership and context diversity. In addition to dialogue and performance, the poetics of oppression (Boal 1979) also relies on the use of symbols. Audience can move toward action by understanding symbols and their relevant meaning. In this project, I identified new symbols with more relevant shared meaning that would allow participants to move closer to embracing a leader identity.

Books such as *Exploring Leadership* (2007) give a rich history of leadership approaches from Great Man and trait theories to reciprocal and systems leadership. Yet, leadership development programs must do more than teach about leadership. Atonacopoulou and Benton (2010) approach leadership above all as a practice. As such,

“learning leadership” is distinctly different from “learning about” leadership. They highlight the importance of recognizing leadership in everyday life. They further note that leadership capabilities are not innate or ready in form but need to be cultivated by practice. They argue that leadership is more than just doing something; it is about being. Three principals in learning leadership include learning about self (inner learning), creating a community of practice (relational) and working with our hearts (love). This approach departs from traditional views of leadership and connects with frameworks of social justice. These frameworks examine leadership outside rigid structures of organizations and envelop passions for a common good. In the curriculum notes, I identified moments that participants seem to be practicing leadership, moving them closer to declaring themselves as leaders.

Additionally, Dr. Roberto Ibarra (1999, 2005, 2006) presents a new approach to teaching for a more diverse population. Although his work is geared toward an increased numbers of Latinos in higher education, the strategies for inclusion are applicable to other areas. His views of “context diversity” are applied to the curriculum notes for the project. *Context diversity* is “a new paradigm that is systemic, inclusive, multidimensional and changing many [learning] cultures” (2005:7). My underlying premise is that traditional ways of learning leadership are out of synch with cultural contexts of participants. Rather than recruiting and retaining leaders, the goal should be to attract local leaders and create settings for them to thrive. “The idea is to reframe (expand/shift) pedagogy, curriculum, policies, and rules without giving up sound educational practices and to include a variety of cultural contexts, such as learning/teaching styles to better serve the need of diverse

populations” (Ibarra 2005:7).

The Theory of Multicontextuality is an amalgamation of cultural context and cognitive models. Successful individuals learn and formulate adaptive strategies that display characteristics interchangeable with models of “Cultural Context” (High and Low) and “Bicognition” associated with dual cognitive perspectives” (Ibarra 1999:3). Bicognition, developed by psychologist Manuel Ramirez III and Alfredo Castañeda (1974) and redefined in 1999, is a micro model of human psychology. Although the work by Ramirez and Castañeda is specific to Mexican-American children in compensatory education, their work highlights the reality of individuals living multiple cultural frameworks that impact the way(s) that they think. Furthermore, their *philosophy of cultural democracy* asserts that an individual does not have to assimilate or chose between the values of home and those outside his or her neighborhood. Individuals can retain their values while becoming familiar with the life style and value systems of the mainstream American middle class (Ramirez and Castañeda 1974:35).

“As critical theory, multicontextuality explains how the composite of people’s experiences through their lives affects their experiences and performances [in the world around them]” (Ibarra 2006:4). Leadership programs for these women must give them the tools to cross community borders and reframe their role in the home and local community settings. In the curriculum notes, I promote the integration of cultural values into the conversation of community leadership. I include culturally-specific examples of leadership that present an alternative to traditional leadership roles. We must think beyond current models. The women in the group must arrive at a place where they

believe that they can be leaders. They must have hope that they can positively shape the community and improve the lives of their children. We cannot become

locked into a belief that success will be accomplished only through a combination of structural and multicultural strategies. There is another way, but educators have difficulty questioning the basic assumption, and they have grown accustomed to treating symptoms (i.e. the lack of diversity) as if they were the problems, which they are not (Ibarra 2005:6).

A leadership program in the Mayfair neighborhood and with this participant pool must reflect the way in which these women are already building a foundation for leadership. The curriculum notes attempt to reframe traditional leadership curriculums to attract Latina women, encompassing their values and identities, and create spaces for them to thrive.

#### Phase IV: Evaluation

On the last day of the ES program, participants selected the date and time for their post program interview. In the interview, participants reflected upon their experience as part of the ES cohort. They responded to questions regarding the individual sessions and the overall impact of the program.

Along with the interview, participants completed a network mapping exercise. Participants listed individuals whom they help and those who helped them. They identified the many ways that they received information that connected them to the community and barriers to community involvement.

In addition to the previous activities, participants submitted a post program questionnaire, with responses to the same questions as included in the pre-program questionnaire. I analyze the data using a repeated measures t-test.



Chapter 5 explores the evaluation findings in more detail and presents relevant literature to situate these results in cultural, community contexts. I assess the effect of the ES program on the cohort of Mexican immigrant women using theories derived from Freirean tenets of social justice and Bourdieu's social capital. These frameworks inform community development, multiple marginality, and network analysis. In this section, I present examples of agency and solidarity expressed through the activities of the ES sessions. Also, I examine the social networks of participants.

### **CHAPTER 3: WHY EVALUATION ANTHROPOLOGY?**

Anthropology should work to be relevant and address ways to solve current issues in society. Kedia and van Willigen (2005) define applied anthropology as the “application of anthropological knowledge, methodology and theoretical approaches to address societal problems and issues” (2005:1). Anthropology can be relevant by 1) studying a particular problem (or a whole set of problems) in a particular locale that examines systematic interrelationships or by 2) conducting research that is aimed at a crucial social issue through a series of investigations that may take place in multiple locations. This inquiry takes a narrow slice of human behavior with a cross-cultural perspective (Pelto and Pelto 1978). In addition, applied or action anthropology can be research that produces socially useful information, translates information to an audience in a way that is relevant and understandable and directly involves the community in the research process.

According to Copeland-Carson (2005) the participation of anthropologists in evaluation work over the past 25 years has increased. Involvement has been so prominent that some speculate the emergence of a transdiscipline that bridges the two areas of inquiry and arms anthropologists with tools that do not just discover the value of activities and programs but explores the evaluated entities as culturally embedded and defined objects.

Anthropologists have worked as consultants, administrators, and academics, combining principles of evaluation and anthropology with innovative approaches. In public, for-profit, and non-profit sectors, evaluation anthropology has been used to study

complex, multisectorial community projects. Holistic anthropological approaches to social change make significant contributions to evaluation. Evaluation anthropologists do not rely exclusively on ethnographic methods but combine qualitative and quantitative findings (Hyland and Brimhall 2005).

Additionally, empowerment approaches to evaluation do more than just observe and evaluate (Fetterman 2001). Through empowerment evaluation, the anthropologist designs a process that increases participatory power and social change through the use of ethnographic methods. These “empowerment processes are ones in which attempts to gain control, obtain needed resources, and critically understand one’s social environment are fundamental” (Fetterman 2001: 13).

In the qualitative evaluation of the SOMOS ES leadership development program, I utilized the strengths of ethnographic- based inquiry and infused it with empowerment approaches. By doing so, I was able to capture responses from diverse participants’ voices and provide recommendations for program development.

## **CHAPTER 4: THE SESSIONS**

Out of the nineteen participants who completed the pre-program interview, only ten participants arrived on the first day. The six-session curriculum themes were shared with the group at the beginning of the recruitment. The program announcement included bulleted descriptions of each session and identified the time and date of the session. An overview of all the sessions is below.

Session Saturday April 10<sup>th</sup> 9-3pm

Session #1:

- Conocimiento and Dreams
- Somos' Mission and Vision
- Definitions of Power (power-over, power-with, power-within)
- Systems of Oppression (race, class, gender, etc.)

Saturday April 17<sup>th</sup> 9-3pm

Session #2:

- Definition of Leadership/Leadership styles
- Promotoras, Community Organizers, Cultural Activists

Monday April 26<sup>th</sup> 9-12pm

Session #3: Family Health and Wellness

Monday May 3<sup>rd</sup> 9-12pm

Session #4: School Readiness and Early School Success

Saturday May 15<sup>th</sup> 9-3pm

Session #5: Ecological Crisis and Garden Day

Monday May 24<sup>st</sup> 9-12pm

Session #6: Next Steps and Graduation

In the following paragraphs, I describe the themes and activities that the facilitator used to present the information to the group, including some participants' responses.

Following each session I provide notes, feedback, commentary and critiques for facilitators. In these notes, I address challenges to the learning process and the practice of

leadership and context diversity. Additionally, I include sample activities and additional resource material as relevant in the session feedback. I have included additional activities in Appendix E.

### *Session #1*

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| 9:00- 930 am | Welcome and Power Name Poems                   |
| 9:30- 10:15  | Overview and Objective                         |
| 10:15- 10:30 | Mission and Vision of Somos Mayfair            |
| 10:30-11:00  | Personal Dreams                                |
| 11:00- 12:00 | Collective Dreams                              |
| 12:00-12:45  | LUNCH  |
| 12:45- 1:00  | Group Agreements                               |
| 1:00-1:30    | Power with,-over, -internal                    |
| 1:30-2:00    | Theory of Oppression                           |
| 2:00- 2:45   | Internalized Oppression and the Internal Voice |
| 2:45- 3:00   | Homework and Evaluation                        |



*Figure 8. Facilitator reviewing the agenda during Session 1.*

The first session took place on Saturday April 10, 2010 from 9:00am to 3:00pm. Participants met in the foyer area of the La Trinidad United Methodist Church, a building

that shares a parking lot with the Somos Mayfair offices. The Somos Mayfair office was housed in a modular building on the corner of South King Road and Vollmer Ave.

The foyer of the church had a circle of folding chairs and a large dry erase board at the end of the room. To one side of the circle was the hallway leading to the restroom and to the other was a kitchenette and a table filled with snacks and coffee and an assortment of tea packets.

The objectives for this session were as follows:

1. To share the objectives of the Escuela Siembra training
2. Create ground rules
3. Explore individual and collective dreams
4. Define power concepts of power-over, power-with, and internal power.
5. Develop a basic understanding of oppression.

The day began with an opening icebreaker and an overview of the objectives of ES training sessions followed by sharing of the mission and vision of Somos Mayfair organization and exploring dreams. The group was given a forty-five minute break for lunch. Lunch was provided. After lunch, the group reconvened to establish group agreements. Then, they shared thoughts regarding power and oppression.

The opening icebreaker was a name power poem. The icebreaker served as an introduction for all the participants and a creative way to begin to explore their identity and self-prescribed talents. For example, the facilitator's name is Aryeh.

**Activa** (*active*)

**Resistencia** (*resistance*)

**Yolotl** (Nahuatl word meaning *heart*)<sup>1</sup>

**Equidad** (*Equity*)

**lucHa** (*Struggle*)

Once the entire circle had had the opportunity to share their names and some descriptive words about them, Aryeh moved on to have participants share why they are there and what they would like to learn from being part of ES. After participants in the circle shared their response, she continued with the sharing of the objectives of the program developed through our planning sessions. In this presentation she included the belief and value statement of Somos Mayfair. She affirmed that,

Everyone has the capacity to be a leader.

Parents are natural leaders and have a capacity to advocate for themselves and their children.

Making change starts from understanding power and oppression, including our own biases.

We honor and build on existing knowledge of the community.

Leadership is action-oriented and always applied to real life circumstances.

Leadership is relational and based on solidarity and collective liberation.

Aryeh presented the mission and vision of the organization in an enlarged-print poster for further exploration. As a group, they read aloud the paragraphs.

The mission of Somos Mayfair is to cultivate the dreams and power of the people of Mayfair through cultural activism, social services and community organizing. We are generations of immigrants, rooted in a vibrant community, who nurture healthy families and speak out for justice in Silicon Valley.

We are working toward the day when all people of Mayfair believe our barrio to be a place where beauty, power, and dignity flourish and Mayfair is extensively connected to the region, valued for our contributions to society and engaged with the broader movement for justice (Shell 2010).

The participants identified words and phrases that most resonated with them. These words and phrases were underlined. These words included: dreams, power, healthy families, justice, connected, and valued. Aryeh facilitated a conversation to explore the terms and hear why participants were attracted to those words.

For discussing dreams, Aryeh used the quote from Noble Laureate Rigoberta Menchú, “what I treasure most in life is being able to dream. During my most difficult moments and complex situations I have been able to dream of a more beautiful future.” Given the prompt, participants were to begin a writing assignment based on a future self. They were to begin their reflection with “I am...” and “I have...” placing them in a futuristic time frame. Once participants were done writing, they shared their writings in dyads. Aryeh offered the group another quote, “A dream you dream alone is only a dream. A dream you dream together is reality.” Participants then formed two groups. Each group was to discuss common dreams for the future of Mayfair community and create a skit to draw attention to the areas that they would like to see improve. After each dramatization, participants reflected on the common themes of the skits. One group created a skit that explored the challenges of managing family needs such as child rearing, healthy living, and employment. Another group’s skit addressed the need for more residents in the neighborhood involved and willing to take action to improve the community. The group took a lunch break after the discussion of shared dreams and debrief of the group skits.

Following the break, Aryeh facilitated the group in creating an agreement for interaction. Participants indicated the conditions that they needed to contribute to the



group. Although this was to be shared agreement, not everyone in the group had to contribute to the conversation. However, consensus was required for statements to be adopted as a group expectation.

After arriving at shared group agreements, Aryeh used image theatre to demonstrate the concepts of power. First she asked participants to walk around the space at a normal pace. As they walked, she began to read statements about internal power. Aryeh asked them to embody this concept. After a few moments, they were given a cue to freeze into an image of internal power, and one by one they were to share a phrase about how one would feel in that scenario. After a quick body shake, they commenced walking around the room again. This time as they walked, Aryeh read statements describing feelings of isolation and the need to defend and show dominance to those around them. Again, they were asked to create a frozen image and a phrase. Lastly, the same activity was repeated; this time Aryeh shared a scenario about being connected and feeling part of a larger network and community. At the conclusion of the image theatre exercise, participants reflected through a large group share-out about what it felt to be in the three distinct positions of power. Aryeh affirmed that the role of community leaders is to create power-with and increase internal power.

The conversation on power continued to explore societal distribution of power. Participants brainstormed a list of those who they see with power and those who they see disempowered. Aryeh then presented them the following chart.

Table 3. Oppression Chart (Shell 2010)

| Systemic oppression and the power structure that maintains it: the social systems in place that make it possible for the elite to dominate the world. |                                   |                                  |                                     |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Oppression  | Agent                             | Target                           | Manifestation in Mayfair and Beyond |
| Racism  | White people                      | People of color                  |                                     |
| Sexism  | Men                               | Women                            |                                     |
| Ableism   | Able bodied                       | Disabled                         |                                     |
| Adultism  | Adults                            | Youth                            |                                     |
| Classism  | Wealthy;<br>Owning class          | Poor;<br>Working class           |                                     |
| Heterosexism  | Heterosexual/<br>Straight         | LGBTQ                            |                                     |
| Intellectualism   | Those with<br>Higher<br>education | Those with<br>lower<br>education |                                     |
| Religion  | Christian                         | Less<br>Dominant<br>Religion     |                                     |
| Militarism  | Those with<br>Military power      | Those without<br>military power  |                                     |
| Xenophobia/<br>Nationalism  | U.S. citizen                      | Undocumented<br>immigrants       |                                     |
|   | English as<br>1st language        | Other<br>languages               |                                     |

Aryeh asked participants about the terms and cited examples to populate the last column. Staff made statements underscoring that the purpose was not to identify “good” or “bad” people but to explore privilege and oppression. Moreover, staff members shared that those who have experienced non-power can recall those feelings and feel empathy. They can understand others on the non-power side even if the non-power was not attributed to the same cause; it builds solidarity.

As a closing segment on power, Aryeh introduced the term of internalized oppression. The group attempted at a definition for the term and brainstormed negative messages that they have received about who they are. After, each participant was to complete the following sentences.

One thing that I like about being a Latina woman is ...

One thing that I wish others would stop saying, thinking, or doing about Latinas is...

One thing that I would like others to know about Latinas is...

After all had shared their statements, they were given a place to stand throughout the room. Then, one by one, they were given the following phrase to say out-loud, "My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am an immigrant woman, and I need to be heard."



*Figure 9. ES participants in presenting their community issues skit to the large group.*

Before closing, Aryeh handed out the homework assignment and did a group evaluation of the day. For homework, participants were to find a newspaper clipping, photograph, poem, story, or song that represented an example of “power-with” and “power-over” to share next session. Participants gave closing feedback about what they learned and what they enjoyed about the first day.

### Session #1 Feedback

In this first session, participants were excited to be part of the group. Many of the participants expressed that they were new to the organization and were eager to get involved. Throughout the day, the group maintained a high level of energy and participation. The success of the session relied on participants giving input and sharing their ideas.

In this session, three main areas seemed problematic. The first area that caused some confusion was the use of quotes to cement the idea of leadership and community building. Most of these quotes were collected in English and translated into Spanish. However, not all the translations were done accurately or with the poetic eloquence. Participants read the quotes, but because they were missing a strong image or emotive poetic language, they were merely words. No background or contextual information was given about the authors of the quote. The participants did not seem to feel connected with the message. For example, a quote from John Lennon that was shared was, “A dream you dream alone is only a dream. A dream you dream together is reality.” This was translated as, *Cuando se sueña solo, es simplemente un sueño. Cuando soñamos juntos, la realidad*

*es nacer*. The phrase *la realidad es nacer* translates into “the reality is to be born.” A better translation might be *cuando soñamos juntos, comienza (or creamos) una nueva realidad*. Details like proper translation can facilitate or hinder interaction. It is important to not just simply translate text into the language correctly (grammatically) but to translate it in a manner that utilizes the language used by its audience. Situating text with a social context is also beneficial. When sharing a quote from John Lennon, it is necessary to share why it was chosen; moreover, explain why the words of John Lennon should have a significant or relevance to the lives of the participants.

The second area that needed improvement was the development of ground rules. Although most of the statements for managing the group came from participants, the staff also gave feedback. The staff mainly championed the rule of hand-raising to speak in the larger group. Establishing rules in some cases is necessary for creating order. However, rules are low context. They delineate what you can do and what you cannot do. When working with groups, it is crucial to explain what the intent is in working together versus going directly to a “not to do list.” In a space where deep reflection and meaning is to be shared, it is perhaps more appropriate to have group agreements that reflect positive intention, instead of a list of prohibited behaviors. These group agreements state the expected behaviors. Rules imply enforcement; agreements require understanding and dialogue. If a rule is broken, there is a punishment; if an agreement is not fulfilled it must be revisited. In group agreements, the responsibility is placed on the entire group, not just on the individual. The rule of raising your hand to speak shifts the power of the group to the facilitator who has the authority to call on the speaker. Statements like “respect each

other” are also problematic. This implies that respect looks the same for everyone. In this situation, it is best to have the group explicitly state the ways in which they feel respected, heard, and seen. Another helpful practice is to use only positive statements. By shifting from a rule-setting mode of “No” and “Don’t,” positive statements allow for the group to begin creating something new. For example, instead of saying “No side conversations” the phrase might be written as, “Give the speaker your full attention.” Group agreements are time consuming, but if done thoughtfully, they can create a trusting and safe space for participation.

This session might be improved by allowing participants to apply the oppression chart to their lives. This session was toward the end of a long day and included language that was not familiar to most participants. A facilitator might first present a definitions page explaining each term to prepare participants for interacting with the chart. Additionally, starting from a participant’s own experience is essential. Before the group can have a conversation about how the rest of society is structured, participants need to understand their own identities. For many participants, they used identity interchangeably with personality. To better help differentiate the two terms and help the participants explore their own multiple identities: person of color, woman, able-bodied, adult, working class, heterosexual, Catholic, immigrant. A worksheet would help them identify their own category under each heading. For example, under religion, participants might be asked how they identify given several possible categories (i.e. Buddhist, Christian, Muslim, and Atheist). After each participant has completed her identities inventory, the group can discuss the larger abstract concepts. However, it must be made personal and

relevant.

Additionally, Tania D. Mitchell (2001) presents different terms in her “Systems of Oppression” chart. Mitchell notes that white supremacy is a system, and it can be viewed through racist acts and comments. The chart lists the following as systems; capitalism, imperialism, patriarchy, heterosexual norm, gender binary, adult privilege and ability. The additional columns in Mitchell’s chart include a section that lists examples regarding how this system can be observed in action and included boxes to list additional “big picture” examples under “internalized,” “interpersonal,” and “institutional” categories.

I have included several other lessons and activities that can be added to this session in Appendix D. Facilitators can take a more visual approach for describing the differences between traditional and community leadership with the pictorial activity presented (Activity #1). Also, a conversation about what is meant by analysis can take place in the introductory session, since this is a skill that will help participants further explore subsequent topics (Activity #5).

#### *Session #2*

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| 9:00-9:15am    | Review the daily agenda, objectives and agreements |
| 9:15-10:00am   | Homework share out                                 |
| 10:00-10:15am  | Los Ojos Brillantes                                |
| 10:15- 10:55am | Leadership Struggles                               |
| 11:00- 11:20am | What does it mean to be a leader?                  |
| 11:20-12:00pm  | Leadership Triangle                                |
| 12:00-1:00pm   | Lunch  |
| 1:00-1:15pm    | Los Diamantes                                      |
| 1:15-1:50pm    | Portraits of Leadership                            |
| 1:50-2:30pm    | Taking on Leadership in Somos Mayfair              |
| 2:30-2:50pm    | Homework: Self Evaluation and Interviews           |
| 2:50-3:00pm    | Evaluation   |

The second day of the training series took place on Saturday at the offices of

Somos Mayfair. The office was open for other activities including a precinct walk orientation. The ES session was held in the lobby area of the offices with chairs arranged in a semi-circle facing a white board. The objectives for this session were as follows:

1. Create shared definitions of leadership
2. Distinguish between democratic (shared) leadership and dominant leadership
3. Connect concepts of leadership with the work of Somos Mayfair.

When participants arrived, they were given the agenda for the day to add to their binder. The day began with a morning icebreaker “I made a mistake.” Many people avoid doing something new for fear of making a mistake. However, making a mistake shows that you are willing to do something, even if you do not know if you will be successful. Thus, the objective of the activity is for each person to experience telling the group, “I made a mistake.” The group in return will affirm and uplift the person by making positive statements and cheering. Some comments shared might include “Thanks for trying” or “It was a good try.” Non-verbal response like pats on the back and hugs are also encouraged. The message given to participants is to try. Further Aryeh states that there may be moments of mistakes or defeats along the way to becoming a leader, but it is always necessary to take action.

After the morning energizer, participants shared their homework assignments with the large group. Some participants typed and mounted responses to the assignment while others searched for images in newspapers in the office. The participants gave several examples of “power-with,” “power-over,” and internal power. Their responses ranged from examples in current events, fairytales, and from their own personal experiences.



One participant brought in a newspaper clipping of volunteers in Haiti helping in the rebuilding efforts as an example of “power-with.” Another brought a children’s book and noted that the king in the story was an example of “power-over.” The women shared that the examples of internal power were more challenging to find. However, one participant chose a magazine clipping of a woman smiling while doing yoga. Even those who did not do the homework in advance were given an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas with the group.

“*Los Ojos Brillantes* (Bright Eyes)” is another theater-based activity. The group begins by walking throughout the space. As they walk, Aryeh reads aloud phrases and directions. After walking for a couple of seconds, they are to find a partner and face them. Looking into each other’s eyes, Aryeh reads,

Look and see in her all the qualities she has as a leader. Her great love for her children. Her determination to work and do whatever is needed to make a better world. See her capacity as a friend, mother, and worker to listen to others. Look and see in her eyes all the sacrifices she had to make to be here, in front of you, developing into a leader (Shell 2010).

She continued to describe the struggle and joys of wanting to take on a leadership role.

The activity concludes with Aryeh stating, “This is part of your leadership, to be able to recognize the leadership and power in others. How does it feel that she is seeing the same in you?” Then participants, many visibly moved emotionally, were asked to share their thoughts and feelings. After several minutes of conversation and a large group hug, participants were ready to move to the next exercise.

Again they were asked to walk around the room. This time they were to visualize that they are a boat in the ocean. The water is calm, and all is well. Suddenly, a massive storm arrives creating dangerous waves. To better protect their boat each must link up

with one more boat for safety. In this dyad, they are to answer the following questions, “Who is your hero? Why does he or she inspire you?” After each person has shared, the same boat imagery is repeated, expect that this time at the end of the storm they need to link up with two other boats. In this triad, they respond to “What characteristics are important to being leaders?” The activity was repeated one more time and participants form a group of four to answer the following question, “What skill or talent do you posses as a leader?” As a large group, they further discuss the exercise and share some of their responses. A five-minute break was given at the conclusion of this activity.

After the break, the participants continued to define leadership. On a sheet of paper folded in half, Aryeh asked the group to identify characteristics of a good leader. Participants shared that a good leader is a good listener, is humble and is determined. The group then brainstormed characteristics of a bad leader. The group shared that a bad leader abuses power; uses power for his or her gain or to hurt others, and does not share the power. Aryeh then asked the group to share why it is important to distinguish between good and bad leadership. She further asked, “Why are leaders important in a community organization?” After some conversation about the role of community leaders in organizations, Aryeh bridged to the next activity by reading the principles of the New Art of Leadership, “Leadership is not intrinsic or exclusive to a few; it is a brilliant possibility for everyone” (Shell 2010).

In the next segment, Aryeh directed the conversation to the central tenets of leadership. She noted that conventional models of leadership often seek to elevate a person’s status, however, the new art of leadership is focused on cultivating new leaders

for the future and sharing the power. She reinforced the tenets of leadership with the Triangle of Leadership activity. In the Triangle of Leadership, she described that leadership is comprised of capacity and ability, commitment, and base. These three areas were the three sides of a triangle; together, they create a strong leader. Through a series of case studies, participants assessed the leadership development of the examples given. The first case study was Christina, a leader who was described as a persuasive public speaker. She speaks emotively and is able to express her ideas well. However, Christina often arrived late to meetings and did not always follow through with her commitments. For example, the week before she had arrived late to a school board meeting and did not bring the numbers of parents she said that she would bring. In this example, participants gave Christina high points under the category “capacity for leadership” but gave her low marks under “commitment.” When the participants discussed her score for base-building, they wondered on whether or not Christina actually had strong community ties. They noted that Christina’s poor turnout of parents to the board meeting might reflected her lack of follow through and perhaps a limited network.

The other case study was of Josefina, a very hard working and respected community leader. She often did the behind-the-scenes work, and did not like to speak up at meetings yet many of the new leaders say they were invited to participate by Josefina. She was always the first to arrive at meetings and the last to leave. Although Josefina had worked with the organization a long time, she felt like the “brain” in the organization should be someone else because that work is not for her. Participants debated a bit more in their assessment of the capacity, commitment and base of this leader. It was clear that

she was highly committed in performing small tasks, but she lacked the commitment to engage in the strategic work of the organization. Although others saw clear skills and talents in Josefina, she struggled to see these talents in herself. She did not see her actions connected to the overall success of the group.

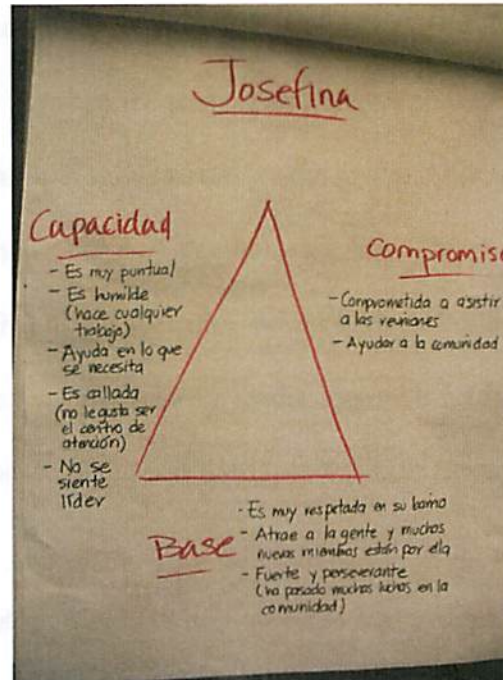


Figure 10. The participants used the triangle model of leadership to assess the leadership qualities of Josefina.

These case study examples placed leadership in a clear and familiar setting for the participants. These stories, although fictional, resonated with the women in the room. Many commented that they saw similarities in their actions to those written on the case study description. In addition to exploring these areas of leadership, the women of the group learned that others share in the same struggles in developing their leadership.

After this small group work activity, the group took a one-hour break for lunch. After lunch, the group reconvened. As a group warm up, Aryeh instructed the participants to form groups of four. In those groups, they formed a diamond shape, with someone

assigned as the leader. The activity *Los Diamantes* (The Diamonds) was a movement exercise that encouraged the participants to work as a team. In the activity everyone took turns leading the group. The movements were slow and intentional. No one in the group was to be left behind. After everyone had the opportunity to lead, the large group convened and reflected on the activity. She asked, “What did you learn? What does this have to do with leadership?” Some of the participants shared that it was challenging to lead the group and quickly think of movements for the group. Others shared that for them it was easy to follow when the leader’s movement was slow. The participants connected the activity to leadership in that as a leader they were required to think quickly in front of a group and often follow one leader. When the leader moved too fast, it was difficult to guess where she was going or what she was doing; it was best to stay at a slower pace with the group.

Following this debrief, participants self-selected into groups of three and four. In those groups they discussed the multiple messages they had received about the qualification to be a leader. For example, some had been told that leaders must have a formal education. After a couple of minutes of small group conversation, the large group reconvened and shared the multiple messages they listed. Aryeh described that these messages come from multiple places in society. Those in the society who have power propagated these messages. As leaders, the participants needed to create new internal narratives that validate their participation. Aryeh continued, “It is no coincidence that those who came before us paved the path by saying ‘Si Se Puede.’”

From the larger messages of leadership, Aryeh then switched the conversation to

exploring the main three leadership opportunities at SOMOS; health promoter, community organizer, and cultural activist. She wrote these three words on the board and asked participants to write down what they thought about these areas of work. She then read the definitions.

***Promotora (Peer educator):*** an outreach worker in the Latino community who is responsible for raising awareness of health and education issues.

***Organizadoras (Community organizer):*** Community organizers work with and develop new local leaders, facilitating coalitions and assisting in the development of campaigns. A core goal of the community organizer is to generate power within the community so that can influence key decisions on a range of issues that affect them.

***Activista Cultural (Cultural Activist):*** promote ideas through culture and creative expression. Respects and draws upon the traditions and symbols myths and expression of culture through theater, poetry, music, dance and visual arts (Shell 2010).

Specifically at SOMOS, Aryeh explained that promotoras were working with support groups, nutrition workshops and exercise opportunities. Organizers were working on current campaigns on school lunches, mobilizing the immigrant vote, and census related opportunities. Cultural activists at SOMOS participated in Familias Unidas theater group and supported the *pastorela* (Nativity Story) and other large community events.

For this session, participants were given two homework assignments. The first activity was to complete the self-evaluation sheet and complete their personal leadership triangle with strengths and weaknesses. The second homework assignment was to sign up to do a local leader interview. The following names were listed for participants to self select based on their availability.

Elisa Marina Alvarado  
Susana Armenta

Wednesday April 21 between 12-4  
between 12-2pm and 4-5:30pm

|                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Darcie Green             | April 19 after 10:30 am |
| Alejandra Herrera Chavez | TBD                     |
| Dolores Santa Cruz       | Thursday after 5:30pm   |

For the interview with these local leaders, participants asked about the person's community work, their inspiration to do this work and the key moments that lead them to this work. As part of the interview questions, also they asked about others that helped them in this work, what models they used, what leadership skills they valued most and insight on how to learn them.

To close for the day, Aryeh read aloud the words accredited to Nelson Mandela.

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We are born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others (Shell 2010).



*Figure 11. ES participants gather in a circle to share ideas during a session.*

## Session #2 Feedback

For this session, I focus my feedback on addressing issues that arose informal, unstructured moments. I also comment on including problem- based curriculum activities and establishing a gender presence in the notable quotes. There were several moments throughout the training that included “non-session times” such as breaks and lunches. During these times, snacks, meals, and other resources were either distributed or were made available for participants. I recommend extending the conversation of group agreements to include these times and spaces. Participants complained about not having access to all the materials needed to complete the exercise. This created some unneeded tension. Participants had not developed expectations for how to distribute meals and snacks. Additionally, some participants did not eat during this time because they were taking care of children or were tending to other household or family issues. They would then eat during the session or go the entire day without eating. Both options impeded them from fully participating in subsequent activities.

For the curriculum design, I suggest a more interactive approach that includes problem- based activities. In this approach, participants could better explore the descriptions of the three core areas of the SOMOS. My recommendation is to emphasize the distinct approach to the work offered by each role, not so much on the current campaign. For example, the group could be divided into three groups. Each group would be given a description of the tools and approaches used by each distinct role. The community organizer would have tools of community research meetings, house meetings, policy changes at local levels, and guiding questions that direct participants to “thinking”



like a community organizer. The cultural activist would have the tools of theater, local traditions, cultural icons, and a set of guiding questions. The same would be done for the health promoter. Once each group had read and understood the basic definition and tools for that job, the entire group would be given a problem to solve. Examples can be taken from current issues campaigns of the organization. If the sample issue were healthy eating, the community organizing group could address the need to change policy of food in the school lunch program. The cultural activist group might develop a small skit for Dia de los Muertos and Halloween that weaved in stories about healthy eating. The health promotion group might brainstorm workshops to offer families on health eating. The goal of the activity would be to expose participants to the multiple approaches to community justice work. By using one issue and identifying multiple ways of action, the participants would understand the diverse options in doing this type of work. Once a participant understood the basic approaches, she could choose her preferred method of action. Working in groups to create a concrete solution to real community issues, the participants begin to develop a new language and a new way of thinking that is multicontextual. Additionally, staff can reinforce that no approach is better than another and that all are needed, further emphasizing the multiple levels where a leader can make an impact.

Lastly, this session might have been more effective had it highlighted community contributions by women. The facilitator chose a quote that was powerful, but it could have been even more relevant to the group if cited differently. The quote was wrongfully accredited to Nelson Mandela. In actuality, this quote is often not cited to its rightful

author, Marianne Williamson. By not crediting this phrase to her, the facilitator unintentionally lost a link to a powerful female leader. Ms. Williamson is a spiritual author and lecturer. She has done significant work in the community including founding Project Angel Food, a program that provides home-bound AIDS patients with meals and founding a grass roots campaign to establish a United States Department of Peace (“Marianne Williamson Official Website” n.d.). Many women expressed a faith or spiritual connection in their life. By showcasing a woman who had translated that value into influencing local work and global leaders, it could have further promoted that woman hold prominent leadership roles.

### *Session #3*

#### HEALTH AND FAMILY WELLNESS

|                   |                                      |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 9:00- 9:15 a.m.   | Spark – Limón Limón                  |
| 9:15- 9:20 a.m    | Agreements, Agenda and Objectives    |
| 9:15 -10:00 a.m   | Sharing Interviews with Leaders      |
| 10:00 -10:45 a.m. | Definition of Health                 |
| 10:45 -11:00 a.m. | Break                                |
| 11:00- 11:20 a.m. | The Socio-Ecological Model of Health |
| 11:20 -11:45 a.m. | Super Heroes                         |
| 11:45- 12:00 pm   | Homework and Evaluation              |

The third session took place on a Monday in the SOMOS lobby area. This was the first of three sessions that took place during the week and with a shorter time slot.

Participants arrived several minutes after the hour. Many commented that it was challenging to leave their homes on a Monday since earlier in the day they had to take their children to school. Some with younger students noted that they would have to leave early to pick up their child from Kindergarten or Pre-school programs. As a result, the icebreaker activity was skipped for this session.

The task for the day was to explore topics of health and wellness. The objectives for this session were to:

1. Define health through a comprehensive and ecological model
2. Understand the social causes and barriers to good health
3. Identify action steps toward health on several levels: individual, family, community, social, and environmental

Aryeh started the session by reviewing the group agreements from the earlier sessions. She invited participants to add other agreements and reinforce the expectations presented on the first day. The participants shared their thoughts pertaining to the food distribution process and gave feedback on the room configuration. They agreed to be more conscious of the fresh fruit distribution during lunch and make sure that all are able to have a serving. Additionally, they noted that it was challenging to focus on the session when children were near.

After all participants had an opportunity to share their thoughts on the group agreements, Aryeh moved on to discuss the homework and the interviews. Not all members were able to complete the interview. Those who did complete the assignment shared the experience. They presented on the interviewee, including lessons learned about leadership and insights that inspired them. Since a significant number of participants were unable to complete their interview, the deadline was extended to the next session, giving participants one more week.

Following the interview share-out, Aryeh introduced the topic of health. She read aloud the definition of health of the World Health Organization. "Health is a state of

complete physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being, not just the absence of disease." She asked participants to form small groups. Each group was given a large sheet of paper with the words Physical, Intellectual, Spiritual, Social, and Emotional Well-being written at the top, one word per sheet and one sheet per group. Each group had 15 minutes to create a visual image using magazines, pictures, and text to describe health in the five dimensions and how it develops.

To further explain the activity, Aryeh asked them to consider the behaviors, actions, attitudes, knowledge and skills associated with those words. For example, under the category of "physical," she gave examples of sports and exercise. The group also identified "medical care, sleep and rest, healthy eating, personal hygiene," and "drinking water" for this category. For intellectual well-being, the group noted, "activities related to reading, writing and memory health such as doing puzzles, engaging in conversations, going to museums," and "learning a new skill or language." Under the category of spiritual well being, the participants wrote, "feeling happy, meditation, prayer, laughter, help others, nature, culture, create art," and "celebration of traditions." Participants wrote, "play, have friends, group activities, sports, cultural, school, museums, walks, family and community celebrations, go to the park, go to church," and "participate in community organizations," for examples of actions under social well-being. For describing emotional well-being, the group identified "talking to family, crying when you are sad, playing with children, express affection, communicate feelings with others, journal" and "dancing" as actions and attitudes that exemplify this idea.

The group added and discussed some of the ideas listed on the sheets of paper.

They noted that in the past they had spend a significant amount of time thinking about healthy meals and exercise but they had not often spent time talking about social, emotional or spiritual wellbeing. They had not considered that part of a healthy lifestyle until now. Rather than waiting until the end of the session, Aryeh introduced the homework assignment after this conversation since it was directly related to that activity.

The homework for this session consisted of a worksheet with a series of items to complete. The premise was that as leaders, they needed to take care of themselves. Under each health dimension, the women had to choose one action item to complete. They described the action and then reflected on how they felt after completing that action for all five categories. After answering a couple of clarifying questions, the group took a short break.

Next, Aryeh presented the next topic related to health. She introduced the socio-ecological model of health. This model recognized the relationship between the individual and their environment. Although individuals were responsible for maintaining a lifestyle that reduces risk and improves health, social environments largely determined individual behavior. For example, community norms and values, access to healthy foods, and local laws affect a person's perception of health. Barriers to healthy behaviors at the community level define an individual's options. The more these barriers are reduced or eliminated, the easier, and more sustainable it becomes to change behaviors. The most effective way to foster healthy behaviors was a combination of efforts at all levels—individual, family, community, societal, and global environment.



**Figure 12.** *The socio-ecological model of health identifies multiple point of impact. (See Shell 2010.)*

As part of the critical analysis of health, Aryeh indicated that the main social determinants of health were influenced by an individual's income, her neighborhood, and her race. Participants identified barriers that prevent good health at each level to explore how this model of influence further.

The following is a list of barriers listed by participants.

Individual - laziness, not eating well, additions - smoking, drinking alcohol, limited access to a doctor, not exercising, depression, stress, not having enough information

Family - not spending time together, domestic violence, not having good communication, there is no discipline, nor rules

Community - lack of safe places to exercise, bad sidewalks, not having access to healthy food in the neighborhood and schools, gangs, drugs, isolation, lack of confidence, lack of organization, lack of resources, poor schools

Society - poverty, inequality, lack of access to medical insurance carriers, immigration policies, unemployment, unequal distribution of funds and resources, control of the corporations, the industrial agricultural system, values of materialism and individualism

Environment - Air and water pollution, a lot of trash, climate change, drought, floods, natural disasters

“So, what can we do?” Aryeh asked the group after the brainstorm of barriers had been explored. Aryeh had the group imagine they were superheroes. They had the responsibility to fight for better health. In the ten minutes that followed, the group created a list and a short presentation as superheroes fighting health injustices. The key characters were SUPER INDIVIDUALS, SUPER PARENTS, SUPER ACTIVISTS, and SUPER ENVIRONMENT. The participants who were cast in these roles wore large cardboard signs with the names clearly written on it. They had an assortment of costume accessories to choose from such as large sunglasses, feather boas, and colorful hats. In the presentation, the participants showcased healthy eating, recycling, and creating safe, healthy neighborhood and feeding everyone on the planet.

Before leaving for the day, Aryeh reminded the group of the homework assignment and gave time to complete the individual session evaluation.

### Session #3 Feedback

I suggest two key points for this session. I advocate for the further inclusion women leaders in the curriculum and give examples that validate the use of theater-based approaches to learning. Although the group was given the homework assignment to arrange a meeting with one of the local leaders and conduct an interview, several were unable to complete the task. For those who completed it, it proved to be a memorable experience and an opportunity to connect to a local female leader. For those who did not complete the assignment, it was yet another opportunity missed. Some of the women who

did not complete the interview noted that they would try to complete it even after the session, but failed to do so. Others were embarrassed and felt guilty, regretting their inability to complete the assignment. In addition to the loss felt by individuals and the group, the local women leaders also missed an opportunity to connect with emerging leaders, share their insights about being involved, and become re-inspired in local community work. However, the two women found it challenging to establish an interview time that accommodated their busy schedules. As an alternative to having participants set up the interviews, the program could facilitate the process and invite the local leaders to join the session either individually or on a panel. Participants could conduct group interviews and collectively gain the information. Participants would find their own connections with the leader's story first hand, without relying on another's summary or interpretation. Stories of local women leaders add value to the work done by current and emerging leaders.



**Figure 13.** Mayfair cultural activists perform a similar skit based on the Mexican Lucha Libre theme to promote the immigrant vote. (Photo courtesy of Somos Mayfair.)

This session included one of the most memorable sessions for the participants.



Even the quietest of participants felt compelled to participate during the Super Hero activity. The use of props, costumes, and masks, through play and theater is significant in this activity. Participants felt empowered to take action and make decisions that impacted their local community. In new roles and new characters, participants reinvented themselves; they were no longer constrained by their everyday ways of being. Participants broke out of their shells; the walls came down. This theater activity allowed them to be someone else, yet at the end of the day, the participants walked away with a sense that *they could* do something.

#### *Session #4*

#### READY FOR SCHOOL AND EARLY SCHOOL SUCCESS OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING:

|                  |                                    |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 9:00 -9:15 am    | Chispa                             |
| 9:15 -10:00 am   | Homework Share Out                 |
| 10:00 -10:45 am  | School Success                     |
| 10:45- 11:00 am  | Break                              |
| 11:00 - 11:45 am | Factors/Triangle of Responsibility |
| 11:45 -12:00 pm  | Homework and Evaluation            |

As the second session taking place on a weekday, it seemed as if participants managed their morning schedules more effectively than for the last session; only a few participants showed up late. The key objectives for the session were as follows:

1. Understand the factors for school readiness and early school success
2. Understand the social causes of the achievement gap
3. Identify the responsibilities of parents, teachers and government for quality education

As an opening icebreaker, the group named one adjective that describes them.

For example, Adriana chose to describe herself as happy. The group created a name/ adjective pattern by throwing a ball around the circle and repeating each person's name and adjective. Once the pattern was well established, Aryeh introduced another ball. The same pattern was repeated. After a couple of cycles with the two balls, another ball was introduced. This activity energized the group.

To begin the conversation about school success, Aryeh prepared the group with a pop quiz relay race. The group split into two teams of five each. First, each team agreed on a team name. This team name needed to have a gesture to reinforce the team identity. Once this was completed, Aryeh read the rules of the game. Each team picked one player to answer the question for each round. As soon as the person knew the answer, she ran to the other side of the room and rang a bell. The first person to the bell with the correct answer earned a point for her team. The list of questions focused achievement level of local schools and indicators of school readiness.

Following the pop quiz, Aryeh proceeded with an informal survey to the group. She asked the group, in a typical week, if they or any family member did the following activities with their child.

- Read for more than five minutes
- Tell stories or sing songs together
- Involve your child in household chores like cooking, cleaning, setting the table or caring for pets
- Play games or do puzzles with your child
- Do arts or crafts with your child
- Take your child outside to play, take a walk or do sports together
- Take your child out to places like the park, a playground or the library
- Eat family meals together

Many participants raised their hands for most statements.

Aryeh shared the school readiness measures used by most schools. The physical skills for school readiness included holding a pencil, cutting with scissors, jumping and hopping, and coloring. Students need language skills such as speaking and listening. Academic skills for children to succeed in kindergarten include knowledge of basic colors, numbers, shapes, letters, and limited reading. Social and emotional readiness skills included smiling, giving hugs, making friends, express emotions, self-regulation, following directions, controlling impulses, paying attention, and engaging in play. By doing the aforementioned activities, parents could support their children's development and prepare the child for school.

Then, Aryeh discussed some quick facts with the group. She cited studies that showed that a child who is rarely spoken to or read to in the early years may have difficulty mastering language skills later in life. Only fifty- three percent of children age three to five are daily read to. A child does engage in regular play time may have difficulty with social interactions as he or she grows. A child who is held and nurtured in a time of stress is less likely to respond with violence later. Furthermore, she exposed performance indicators that revealed that students in the local school district were performing lower than their counterparts in the county. In the Santa Clara County School Readiness Overall assessment, only four percent of Alum Rock School District students were prepared for kindergarten compared to forty-six percent countywide. However, eighty percent of parents believed that their child was entering school with average or above average school readiness skills.

Aryeh shared about the third grade marker. Third grade is a significant milestone

in student development. From kindergarten to third grade, students are learning to read. From third grade on, reading is essential to student learning. A student's third grade reading level is a key indicator of future success. To further stress the relevance to Latino parents in Mayfair, she disclosed that only forty-one percent of Latino children in the county were proficient in academic skills. Alum Rock was the lowest performing district in the Bay area. To some parents this was shocking news; to others it affirmed their thoughts and beliefs about the local school. Even to participants aware of the challenges in the school district, the comparative data results were worse than anticipated.

After a short break, the group reconvened and continued to discuss the responsibilities of all key stakeholders. To structure the conversation, the group used a case study example, the story of Juan.

#### **CASE STUDY #1 Story of Juan**

Juan is a third grader at Cesar Chavez Elementary School. His parents migrated from Mexico nearly ten years ago, hoping to find work and make a better life for their children. His parents both work two jobs and are rarely home. They do not speak English and have never met the teacher at his school or gone to a parent-teacher conference. The teachers are predominantly white and do not speak Spanish. Juan's parents felt unwelcomed and uncomfortable when they registered him for school. The school is run down. Many teachers and teachers' aides were laid off because of the budget cuts. All arts, sports and afterschool programs were cut. There are nearly 50 students in a class with one teacher. Children receive little encouragement to pursue college or careers. Due to No Child Left Behind, the curriculum is geared toward the tests and reflects little about Juan's home culture or experience. Student performance at Juan's school has consistently been extremely low for years. When Juan is at home, he is expected to take care of his younger brother. The home is shared with another family, and the TV is always on. He has a hard time concentrating on his homework and often comes to school tired and without having done his homework. He is failing in his schoolwork, and the school has decided that he will not be promoted to the next grade with his classmates at the end of the year (Shell 2010).

The participants read the story in small groups. They identified the obstacles and

challenges that contributed to Juan's failure in school. They considered the social, economic, and political factors that created inequity in school achievement. They determined that Juan's academic shortcomings were not attributed to laziness or unintelligence; several other elements influenced his ability to do well in school. Once the group had generated several contributing factors, Aryeh asked them to rank the top five factors they believed were the most influential determinants for early school success. Between the two groups, the following factors were listed as top influences.

1. Parent involvement in school
2. Parent involvement with homework
3. High expectations
4. Teacher competency
5. Amount of resources a school has
6. Language barriers
7. Cultural relevancy of curriculum
8. Income level

When discussing income, the group concluded that the family's income level dictated their actions and brought on additional stressors that impacted Juan's ability to learn. Their limited income forced them to share a household with others, leaving no quiet space at home for Juan to study. Since his parents were always working in low-paying jobs, they worked extra hours and did not have time to help. The family income also influenced where they could afford to live and thus inherited a school in a community with limited resources.

Although poverty played a significant role in Juan's educational experience, there were certain actions that his parents, the school and the government could do to support him. In the next activity, the group used the triangle model and listed the responsibilities of each stakeholder. They determined that it was the responsibility of the parent to ensure

cultural pride, promote language, spend time reading and helping with homework, provide quiet space, set high expectations, advocate for their child and be involved in the child's school. Measures that a school could take to support student learning included maintaining an appropriate student-teacher ratio, have a culturally relevant curriculum, ensure effective teaching practices, set high expectations for students and manage resources to support the expectations. The group had a challenging time discerning the governmental responsibilities for school success. However, they did mention the need for legislators to make funding for education a priority. Aryeh added that local, state and federal governments could make decisions on standards, mandates, and distribution of resources.

As a closing brainstorm to this topic, the group listed action steps that parents can take to make sure that schools are providing a quality education. Among the activities discussed, participants named the following: involvement in school meetings and committees, gaining a better understanding of the education system, its standards and objectives, and talking to other parents about their experiences and demands.

As homework participants were to interview their neighbors about local schools. In the interview, participants talked to parents and neighbors about their perceptions of academic performance at local schools. As with all homework, the responses from the activity and a personal reflection of the activity would be shared with the group in the subsequent session. Also, the participants were given the session evaluation to complete at home and return at the next session.

#### Session #4 Feedback

This session was highly interactive. Participants shared personal experiences about raising school-age children. The session provided local statistics and information about the schools. It presented the issues related to schools and the use of a case study depicting a diverse, complex scenario. The participants remained engaged and alert from beginning to end. In the opening group competition, they were enthusiastic in answering the questions pertaining to early education success. Even though the facilitator faced challenges with the translation that at times made the questions in this trivia relay a bit confusing, the team moved forward and completed the activity. The relationship that had been established between the participants and the facilitator was strengthened by the participants' ability to engage in the translation process. This exchange of trust created an added layer of solidarity and collaboration. The relay trivia presented the material in a fun, interactive game that encouraged the group to move around the space and work together to answer the questions. In the end, no one kept score, and all cheered the collective win.

The scenario was a good activity to begin to unpack the complexities of the educational system and the multiple responsibilities of key stakeholders. Through the scenario of Juan's story, participants were able to see that all key groups, parents, teachers, and administrators have challenges, limitations and responsibilities when it comes to providing a successful support structure for students. Additionally, issues and concerns about class were added to the conversation. This example further underscores the importance of identifying points of action at the individual, family, group (school)

and societal levels.

Understanding the complexity of the United States public school education system can take up several sessions. Many key concepts were not discussed in this session. Should the participants or the work of SOMOS become more entrenched in school reform or school policy process, it is important to identify key decision-making bodies that govern schools. The facilitator may choose to present an overview of the roles at the federal, state, and local levels. Participants might benefit from exploring educational standards and mandates. The facilitator may also choose to share key performance indicators such as the Academic Performance Index (API) and Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) part of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) or explore funding sources such as Annual Daily Attendance (ADA), class size reduction grants, and Title I, II, and III money allocations. Additionally, the facilitator can also share literature that exemplifies parent-driven policy changes, such as the creation of small schools in East San Jose and proponents of bilingual education.

Also, the curriculum might include examples of local school reform driven by parent leaders such as small-school and charter school victories in Alum Rock School district. Additionally, facilitators can show case how parent support has been critical for policy regarding bilingual education, in-school lunches, and quality school resources.

#### *Session #5*

#### ECOLOGICAL CRISIS AND SOLUTIONS

|                     |                                       |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 9:00 to 9:15 a.m.   | Spark, Agreements and Objectives      |
| 9:15 to 10:00 a.m.  | Share the Homework                    |
| 10:00 to 10:40 a.m. | On the ecological crisis (PowerPoint) |
| 10:40 to 10:50 a.m. | Break                                 |



|                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 10:50 to 12:00 p.m. | Industrial Power System |
| 12:00 to 12:45 p.m. | Lunch                   |
| 12:45 to 1:00 pm    | Walk to Veggielution!   |
| 1:00 to 3:00 pm     | Cultivate the land      |

The session began with a quick energizer consisting of doing the wave and a quick check-in about participants' perceptions on the environment. The participants were then asked to share the homework assignment and report back about the parent interviews. Most parents had negative experiences with the local schools. They shared their perceptions regarding Alum Rock School Districts as one of the lowest performing districts in the area. Few parents had children enrolled in locally reformed "small schools" and public charter schools. They shared their insights and comparisons between their children's previous schools and their new placement. Some parents commented that they would like to do more and be more involved in the schools, but they did not know what exactly they could do to support learning. Other parents disclosed that although they did not always know what was happening in the classroom, they made it a point to volunteer. All the parents interviewed communicated that they valued their children getting a quality education.

After the group shared the responses from the parent interviews, Aryeh presented the objectives for the fifth session. The aim of this session was to discuss the ecological crisis and identify action items. Specifically, the goals of the session were as follows,

1. Understand the causes of the ecological crisis and the impacts to our health
2. Understand the industrial food system and the impacts on the environment and our health

3. Explore solutions and actions we can take

4. Connect with the earth

Through the use of a PowerPoint presentation, the facilitator shared information about the current state of the planet. The slides highlighted the environmental issues of increased litter and overflowing landfills, the need to recycle and produce less waste. The presentation promoted changing small household behaviors such as not using Styrofoam containers and individual bottles of water to create substantial changes in the environment. The PowerPoint slides gave visual examples of the compounded effect of these products on the planet. It gave information about harmful environmental trends in the United States. Participants were shocked to see the amount of waste a family actually produces. They were surprised to learn how much of that waste could have been recycled or eliminated by some small, relatively simple household adjustments. At the end of the slides, participants shared their commitment to eco-friendly practices. They also discussed the challenges to implementing these changes with limited resources, and restrictions on space, and time.



**Figure 14.** *The slides depict the 2.5 million bottles used ever hour in the U.S. (Photo courtesy of Movement Generation Justice and Ecology project.)*

After that conversation, the group took a fifteen-minute break. Following, they resumed the session and began to discuss the development of the industrial power system. Aryeh had placed large pieces of chart paper around the room. Each piece of chart paper had a news headline written on it. The headline described situations related to food justice.

Latinos have the highest rates of diabetes and obesity in the country.  
 Rising food prices cause riots in Mayfair.  
 Pesticides and processed foods are the causes of diet-related diseases.  
 Urban, poor communities have no access to fresh organic produce.  
 More farmers have been displaced in Mexico due to the flood of cheap U.S. corn.  
 Food companies make excessive profits, while more people go hungry (Shell 2010).

As a group, the women began to identify the contradictions inherent in these headlines and identified the challenges of the food production system. Aryeh expressed the flaws of the food system. The way we grow, transport, and consume food is not producing the results that are healthy for communities. In order to change how we do things, we first have to understand what is wrong with the current system. Then we can begin to create a

system that matches our values.

Aryeh further revealed that an increasing number of farmers have been displaced from their land, and many more are suffering hunger. Rural communities are in ruins, and more urban communities have food-related diseases and limited access to healthy foods. We now have more landlessness, and the number of people leaving their farming communities is increasing. At the same time, we see the expansion of industries promoting monoculture projects. The power of transnational corporations on food systems is increasing worldwide. It is not acceptable that during the current crisis food prices are still rising; more people around the globe cannot afford food while companies continue to make excessive profits. Corn and grain stored in large silos often rot and are discarded while over 800 million people worldwide go to bed hungry every night. Aryeh painted a grim picture of the state of food production and distribution. To most of the participants, this new information was overwhelming. However, all understood that this subject was important, and that Aryeh was passionate about sharing it.

To better understand how the food system functions, the group engaged in an activity that explained each stage in the food system. The participants formed small groups. Each group was given a description of a stage in the food system. They were responsible for reading the description and creating a visual representation of that stage. Some pre-printed images such as distribution trucks, corn, and factories were given to the group, according to corresponding stage. The group was to complete the task in fifteen minutes. At the end of the fifteen minutes, most groups had not been able to complete the drawing, so Aryeh gave them an additional five minutes. When the large group resumed,

each group showed its picture and read their scenario aloud.

The first group to present described sustainable agriculture. Their description read,

#### **Sustainable Agriculture**

A small farmer owns a farm of 40 hectares in Mexico an increasingly wide variety of vegetables, many varieties of corn heritage fruit trees and animals that graze freely. The farm has more than two dozen crops and many local birds, pollinators and wildlife. All food waste and animal waste are composted to fertilize crops and make the soil healthy. Pests are controlled by the use of beneficial insects and crop rotation. Food is for local consumption and sold in the local market community by small farmers. The seeds are owned and shared by local farmers and stored in seed banks. The crops each year are more robust and adapt to the conditions of the region. The members in the community eat food grown locally. They are connected with the place they live and gather to celebrate the harvest (Shell 2010).

The group decided to depict this scene with large trees, row of crops, animals, and happy-faced farmers with a proud Mexican flag displayed in the background. The facilitator approached the group and posted the drawing and description on the wall. Then she read and posted the following sign next to the drawing.

Due to free trade agreements, U.S. inundates Mexico with its cheap, subsidized corn. Small farmers cannot compete and go bankrupt. Forced to abandon their land, they migrate north in search of work and better opportunities for their families. Large companies come and convert farmland to grow corn for ethanol used as agro fuels for cars which contributes to global warming (Shell 2010).

To the shock and dismay of the group she began to attack the picture by crossing out the image. She drew people fleeing the scene, depicting some stranded on the roadside. The entire group was silent during this process. She asked the next group to continue with their presentation. The group read,

#### **Production**

A large agricultural company called Monsanto has created a seed for Roundup Ready Corn that is genetically engineered to produce for only one year. Farmers

have to buy new seeds every year. The seed is resistant to pesticides. When pesticides are sprayed by aircraft in the field, all other plants, insects and animals are killed for maize. Corn is grown on a farm of 20,000 acres, growing only the corn. Farmers use tractors and machinery that require the massive use of fuel. The farm has only a handful of workers who are not unionized and primarily migrant workers. Workers are paid \$ 5/hr and are exposed daily to toxic chemicals that make them sick (Shell 2010).

For this stage, the group used the pre-printed images of tractors and large farm machinery. Their sheet was covered with rows of corn stalks covered by clouds of pesticides. The farmers in the scene had faces with frowns painted on and pointed to their empty pockets. The groups continued in a similar fashion, reading their descriptions and displaying their drawings.

#### Processing

Corn is purchased by Cargill and taken to a factory to make corn syrup, high fructose corn and other corn products. Large diesel trucks deliver the processed corn to the Kellogg's factory where it becomes a cereal called Corn Pops. In this plant, corn is combined with various chemical additives, preservatives and ingredients so it can sit on the shelf for long periods of time. The grain is then sent to another factory and is packaged in plastic and cardboard. Each plant produces toxic pollutants that contaminate air, water and nearby communities. The workers are mostly women who work 12 hours a day under very difficult conditions.

#### Distribution

Corn Pops cereal is transported over 1500 kilometers by train and trucks to supermarkets and liquor stores in Mayfair. Poor neighborhoods across the country are inundated with fast food restaurants, liquor stores and supermarkets that sell only cheap, processed foods and fruits and vegetables grown with pesticides. Residents are forced to buy food products that are made by large corporations. All products are wrapped in colorful packages to make them appealing to children. Corporations spend billions of dollars on advertisements attempting to convince consumers that processed foods such as Corn Pops cereal are healthy. Americans watch an average of 1,800 hours of television a year, typically 3-5 hours a day.

#### Consumption

Consumers in the Mayfair community are forced to eat mostly processed foods that cause health problems. There is an epidemic of Type II diabetes, high cholesterol, heart problems, depression, ADHD and other health problems that are linked to poor nutrition. There is an increase of obesity and health problems

related to diets, especially in poor communities of color in the U.S. This is becoming a global problem as the name brand food and processed foods in the U.S. are pushed in countries around the world, flooding markets. 1 billion people worldwide are considered obese and 64% of all Americans are obese. Drug companies are making billions of dollars in profits for the treatment of diseases related to nutrition. Health care is more expensive and harder to access.

#### Elimination

Food scraps are thrown, instead of composted and taken to landfills that can not be broken because they are so tightly packed that there is a lack of oxygen. Landfills are the largest producer of methane which is 21 times stronger at trapping heat than carbon dioxide, contributing to global warming. In addition, all plastic and cartons used in the industrial food system is thrown into landfills. There are currently 3,091 active landfills in the United States and more than 50,000 inactive landfills — 75-80% of these are contaminating the groundwater. Studies show that risk of cancer increase for residents living near landfill sites. Landfills are predominantly located near the low-income communities of color (Shell 2010).

Once all groups had presented, Aryeh opened the floor for reflections on the activity. She asked the participants to share their feelings about the food production story. She also apologized to the group whose drawing she attacked. She explained that when she attacked the drawing, she was representing the attack on communities by the current food system. Those in the group disclosed that they felt sad, angry and hurt by the attack but understood the symbolic gesture in the end. Participants shared that they began to see how the actions early in the food system had negative effects in later stages. Health issues such as diabetes, obesity, heart problems, respiratory problems, birth defects, ADD, depression, and mortality rates were prevalent in this industrialized food process. Those who cultivate the land, those who harvest the land, and those who consume the harvest were all affected.

With the current food system, we impact the environment by contaminating water,

air, and soil. Impacts to the environment also included pollution caused by distribution of products and pollutants created through the processing of food products. Participants were asked to identify the benefits of sustainable food productions. Among the responses given, participants noted better health, less impact on the environment, and strengthening of community ties. The reflection concluded with identifying clear actions individuals and families could take to create healthier communities. Participants acknowledged eating whole, unprocessed, organic produce, demanding fresh local produce at stores and farmers markets, and participating in community gardens like Mesa Verde and Veggielution as part of those healthy strategies.

To close the segment of the session, Aryeh led the group in a simple call and response, “What do we want?” — “Healthy Community!” She then handed out the homework for the day and adjourned for lunch.

After lunch, the group packed up for the day and headed out to Veggielution Community Farm for the rest of the day. The farm was approximately four blocks away from the SOMOS’ offices, but it required traversing busy intersections near freeway entrances and exits.

The groups of women with their children arrived at the farm a couple minutes after one o’clock. At the farm Veggielution farm staff members greeted them and prepared for the first activity. The families gathered under a tree, and a Veggielution staff member and her son presented a story. The story was about an old grandfather who tended the farm and passed down his knowledge to the townspeople. The old man used his hands to cultivate the land and bring good fortune to his family.





*Figure 15. Participants and their children spend an afternoon at Veggielution Community Farm*

For the hour and a half following the story, the women and their children participated in the farm work. They pulled weeds and harvested mixed greens and carrots. Some children decided to play in the fields after a couple of minutes and enjoyed a day in the sun. At the end of the session, families took home a small amount of the harvest as well as pepper and tomato plants.

#### Session #5 Feedback

This session was the most action-focused. The participants made comments about the changes they would implement in their homes. The use of the PowerPoint presentation raised the level of professionalism among the group members. They assumed a more traditional student role and received the information well. The pictures on the slides resonated with what they saw in their community. They also made direct linkages between their individual actions and improvements to the environment.

Working in groups for the second activity proved troublesome for a few and extremely exciting for others. Groups did not have the same number of participants. One person was with only her teenage daughter who accompanied her that day. Cruz

commented, “*Como que me quede sola. Estaba con mi hija pero ella no me pudo ayudo.* (It was like I was left on my own. My daughter was there, but she could not help me.)” For this participant, this activity was her least favorite for that reason. However, others had a good time coloring and drawing the scenes assigned. They recalled how much fun it was to do those types of activities and mentioned that they might do more drawing and coloring in the future with their children, as typically they provided those activities for their children.

The fieldtrip to the community garden was a favorite activity. They enjoyed the afternoon in the fields with their children. One participant even brought along a friend to share in the experience. The participants were able to learn about the services offered by the farm and took home some organic produce. Yet, the participants also mentioned that they were not prepared for the trip. It was dangerous for some to travel under the freeway overpass and cross busy intersections on the way to the farm. Others noted that neither they nor their children had the proper attire to be out in the sun for two hours. They lacked hats, sunglasses, and other protective layers. *En pleno solazo...como que me iba a explotar la cabeza.* (In severe sunlight...I felt like my head was going to explode.) In the future, an information sheet for service at the farm can be provided to the participants. Veggielution now has a section on its website that describes what to bring and wear for volunteer workdays.



Figure 16. Too much sun at the farm.

Another mother noted,

*Es importante interactuar con los niños per no nos dejaban. No, no dejaron realmente. Yo por estar cuidando a mis niños no puse mucha atención. Perdí muchos detalles que realmente me gustarían aprender. Cuando explicaron lo de las plantas me lo perdí porque andaba detrás de mi niño que estaba ya trepándose arriba...todas estábamos enfocadas en los niños no estuvieran haciendo desastres. (It's important to interact with the children, but they did not let us [learn]. No, no they did not let us, really. I was watching my kids, and I did pay much attention. I lost a lot of details that I really would have liked to learn. When they explained about the plants, I missed it because I was after my son who was climbing up things...We were all watching so our kids would not be making messes.)*

Although families had a fun time in the end, this mom would have preferred some additional support, perhaps by the child care staff, so that she could have continued to dedicate more energy to learning rather than looking after children.

#### Session #6

|             |                                       |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| 9-9:15      | Chispa                                |
| 9:15-10:00  | Review Homework: Letter to the Future |
| 10:00-10:45 | Update on current work at SOMOS       |
| 10:45-11:00 | Break/ Preparation for Graduation     |
| 11:00-12:00 | Graduation/ Closing Ceremony          |

This was the last session of the program. The objectives for the session were not as explicitly laid out as they had been for the previous sessions. The main objective seemed to be the culmination of the program with the graduation and closing ceremony. The *chispa* in the morning was “Do as I Do.” First in pairs, participants would take turns being mirror images of their partner. For example if one person moved her right hand up, her partner, who was facing her, would raise her left hand and attempt to make the movement almost simultaneously. After a couple of minutes of work in dyads, the exercise was done with all participants facing the same directions and following the small, intentional movements of the leader. This activity seemed to ground participants and force them to give their undivided attention to the exercise.

After this activity, they gathered in the large group and shared the letters assigned the previous session. The letters were addressed to their great-great- grandchildren. In the letters, participants shared their hopes and dreams for the future of their families and community. Not all participants came prepared with written letters and eloquent statements, but all shared their thoughts. Once all participants shared, the group was joined by two other SOMOS staff members. One staff member spoke about community organizing at SOMOS, and the other described the Promotoras program. Aryeh discussed current cultural activism program activities. Each staff member shared a brief overview of their departments and described past accomplishments. Participants then identified one or two areas that they were interested in pursuing after the ES program.

Once Aryeh had recorded the women’s responses, the group took a short recess. During this break, they prepared the room for the graduation ceremony. The circle of



chairs was disbanded, and chairs were placed in rows. A few participant family members attended the graduation ceremony. The executive director of SOMOS gave the opening remarks to the audience. A community leader who was interviewed by the participants earlier in the program was also in attendance. Participants then shared their thoughts on the program and read parts of the letter to the future generations aloud. The audience was invited to share their thoughts, as well. Two of the participants' husbands spoke during this time. At the conclusion of the event, the participants took a group photo with program certificates.



*Figure 17. ES Cohort 2010 Graduation Picture.*

#### Session #6 Feedback

In this session, the participants began to make plans for the future. The participants seemed to enjoy writing a letter to their great- great- grandchildren. They were excited and emotional when reading the letters to the small group in the session and to the larger group during the ceremony. However, many commented that their family members were unable to attend a ceremony during the workday. Yet, as a public acknowledgement of the work done by the participants of the ES, it was important to

have a large attendance of community members. In the future, a formal investiture might include more community leaders and SOMOS staff members.

Additionally, the women seemed to need more time to explore next steps for the cohort and individual participation with SOMOS. This session used limited modes of learning. It did not include methods such as interactive exercises, Image Theater, and visual examples that had been successful in the previous sessions.

As a closing session, I recommended a setting time to define the next steps and actionable items clearly. This program loses momentum and sustainability without explicitly delineated next steps. Thus, this was a successful learning experience but an isolated occurrence.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The staff had begun a practice of including Nahuatl words and Indigenous practices into their work as a component of their social justice approach that valued the cultural richness of the Latino heritage. They reclaimed cultural roots and continued with Indigenous traditions.

## **CHAPTER 5: EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

I was able to explore the leadership models and the factors that added to the success of individual sessions and the overall impact of the program through my evaluation of SOMOS Mayfair's ES leadership program. I was able to identify key factors to community development and address issues related to marginality based on one hundred hours of observation of the organization and one-on-one interviews obtained from the participants after completing the program.

In addition to rich qualitative data from participant interviews and observation, I incorporated quantitative data through the analysis of pre and post survey responses. I used StudentVoice web-based software to analyze this data. StudentVoice calculates a t-test statistic that assumes unequal sample sizes. This equation, in essence, creates a weighted average of the variance components typically included in the t-test. A weighted average takes sample size into consideration when averaging the two components. It allows the component that comes from a larger sample to have more weight on the final average. Performing this statistical analysis of the survey data, the several items produced results that indicate statistical significance,  $p < .05$ . Participant responses after completing the ES training sessions demonstrated positive learning in those core learning areas. Participant responses during the interview also confirm a deep reflection and learning of all the statements with statistical significance. I include the statements and their levels of significance in the report of evaluation findings.

### **THE OVERALL SESSION DESIGN**

As an observer outside of the organization, I was most able to "defamiliarize" this

space to examine the organization and participants' perceptions of leadership and community building. By defamiliarizing, I was able to interpret the ideas, customs, and values that shape the group's reality pertaining to the topics discussed.

In designing this inaugural training, the design process began when the team first thought about the project (Zeizel 2006). Adhering to the spiral metaphor of design, session feedback serves to re-inform the curriculum by identifying a domain of acceptable responses. The curriculum progressed through linked cycles of implementing and adjusting. As such, each activity is a test. "Testing makes contradictions apparent (1) among the elements of design at a particular stage of development and (2) between the design and previously accepted requirements it was intended to meet" (Zeizel 2006:27). The entire six-session program is also a test.

By observing and documenting participant responses, I identified elements of the session structure and models of leadership that combined agency, self-awareness, and context diversity. In the recommendations, I revealed the contradictions and shortcoming of the programs as it was implemented. I presented key insights into a potential disconnects of messages and interactions and potential approaches to improving the sessions.



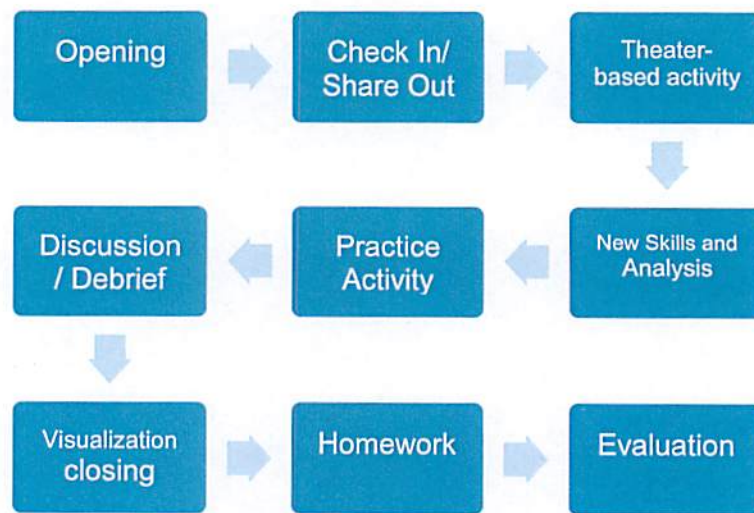


Figure 18. *Somos Session Structure*

The overall structure of the sessions seemed to flow well. Through the sessions, participants explored new areas of content, applied the new learning to relevant life situations and shared their thoughts with the group about the experience and the feelings attributed to these newfound skills. The theater-based activities and visualization elements created threads of continuity throughout the sessions and pushed participants to see themselves as active agents in this work. These activities served as transitions between lessons; they reinforced the message of the previous activity and prepared participants for the next segment.

The facilitator made a strong impact on participants by modeling new behavior as well as presenting new skills and terms. For example, in the first lesson, the group developed group agreements. This was not a lesson *about* group agreements in community work; rather, it was an exercise in acknowledging the multiple interests involved when people come together.

I propose that the main objective of group leadership development should not be

entirely focused on changing immediate behavior, but in changing current attitudes.

Changing the way that participants think about themselves is the first step toward affecting the issues in their community. This change allows participants to engage in the learning process, cultivating sustainable and continuous benefits. Thus, strong leadership development training programs must augment a participant's knowledge set in the following areas:

1. Intentional areas of learning: Participants learn new information about early child education, health, wellness, and the ecological crisis.
2. Broadening the scope of learning: Participants learn new ways to interact with other community members through small group dialogue, performance-base activities, and create a heightened sense of self.
3. Affirming strengths and talents: Participants are affirmed in their strengths as leaders in their families and communities. They are reminded that they were powerful and capable. They surpass multiple obstacles and continue to better themselves.
4. Re-contextualizing skills and talents: Participants begin to value aspects of their identity, as mothers and leaders of a family; roles that they otherwise had overlooked. They begin to see themselves in new roles, using their skills in community situations.



*Figure 19. This figure brings together the elements observed during the ES program.*

Participants joined the ES training because they wanted to learn more about leadership, health promotion, early education success and environmental issues. Participants had assessed their own understanding of these topics and chose to enhance what they already knew by acquiring new information through the ES program. However, throughout the workshop they were also exposed to new knowledge that they did not anticipate. Yet, the facilitator intentionally included these components. The mixing of multiple modes included content- and process-based approaches for addressing deep, complex concepts such as community leadership development. Sometimes the curriculum designer is the only one that knows the concepts and practices, in this case the use of theater-based activities to facilitate learning. By participating in the session, participants learn how to incorporate theater into community work. Programs such as ES broaden the scope of learning for participants beyond their expectation.

Additionally, the sessions focused on building participants' confidence and

engaging in honest dialogue. Continuously, participants were asked to identify areas where they excelled. They were encouraged to share their strengths, talents, and stories of triumph with the group. For many of the women, the ES sessions were the only times that they could speak confidently and feel proud about their accomplishments. The program pushed them to re-contextualize their strengths and talents to a community leadership setting. When they began the program, many women expressed that they did not yet see themselves as leaders. They did not feel that they knew enough or did enough to warrant the title. However, through the program they discovered that they were leaders in their families (A related measures t-test was used to analyze the following statement: I am a leader in my family,  $p < 0.05$ ). Also, they realized that several people sought their advice, guidance and expertise when it came to community issues and finding resources. Also, some participants began to see that their skills and talents gained from previous experiences could be applied to community work. For example, through one of the session activities, Adriana, who had been a visual artist in Mexico, realized that she had a valuable skill to contribute to the organization. Her drawings could help someone better understand a concept or could be used to provide power imagery to support a cause. It had been many years since she had drawn or painted anything.

In the sessions, participants shared their experiences and learned from others in similar situations. It created an alternative epistemology and safe space (“Patricia Hill-Collins” n.d.). The creating of the safe place, women are able to engage in dialogue and not debate to create shared knowledge. By sharing about their lived experiences, the women do not create a homogenous Latina women’s perspective, but rather they produce

a collective Latina women's standpoint. "In order for an oppressed group to continue to exist as a viable social group, the members must have spaces where they can express themselves apart from the hegemonic or ruling ideology" ("Patricia Hill-Collins" n.d.: 5). After the sessions, participants disclosed that they wished that they had more time with the group. They shared that the ES sessions were one of the few spaces where the women felt comfortable and supported enough to share their questions, challenges, and victories of becoming a leader. (A related measures t-test was used to analyze the following statement: When I have a problem, there is someone I can go to for support or guidance,  $p < 0.05$ .)

No one is born with all the knowledge need to become a leader; learning is a life-long process. Several of the women when first interviewed were surprised and complemented that a staff member had recommended them for the training. They felt as though they were not equipped for the task. Some women stated that they did not have any formal education; others commented that they did not know why staff members had recruited them. The women had not yet accepted that they could learn to become leaders. In learning leadership, the women discovered that they were able to learn the skills and concepts. (A related measures t-test was used to analyze the following statements: I understand how power is distributed in society; I understand what it means to have "power-with;" I can name situations that demonstrate "power over,"  $p < 0.05$ .)

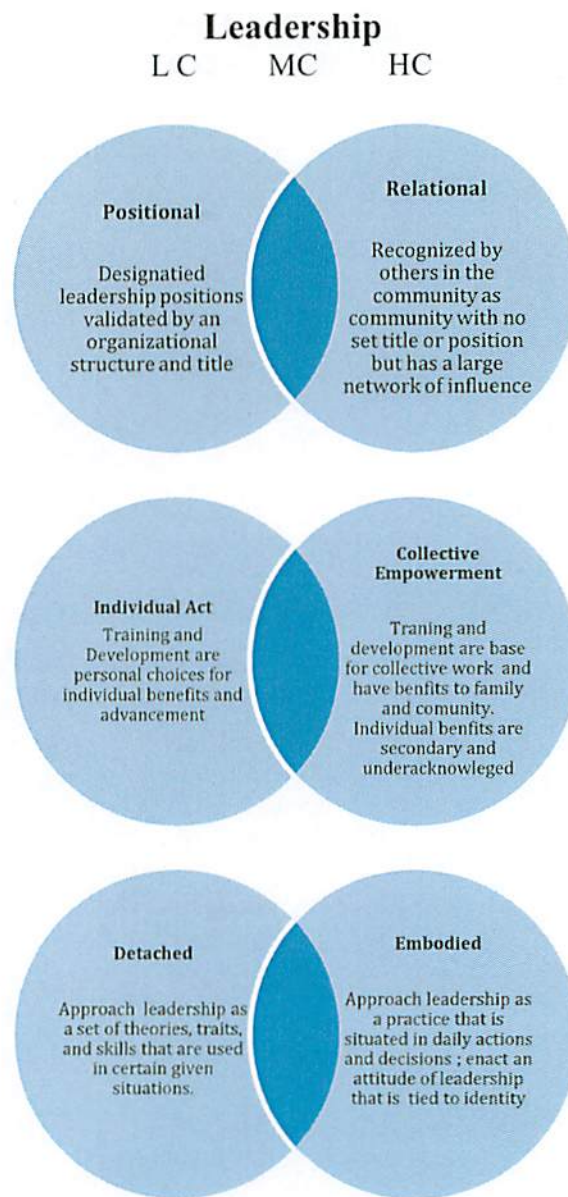
Additionally, participants learned that information was accessed through workshops. They did not need to be preexisting experts on a subject to make a change. They could gain useful information through workshops and training sessions.

Additionally, the framing of leadership for this population must be different. It must shift from a notion of leadership as an individual action to one of collective empowerment (Blackwell 2007). It must create a space with multiple contexts. The figures below demonstrate the shift in ideologies that can best support more women leaders in this neighborhood. This model requires rethinking and reframing our approach to leadership to allow for context diversity. It changes how we define leadership and how we practice its development.

Revisiting Ibarra (2005) Tools created to designate interactions as high context (HL) and low context (LC) derive from research developed by anthropologist Edward T. Hall, a pioneer in the field of intercultural communication. Hall notes that families and community imprint on individuals the values, sets of behavior, and learned patterns that encompass what we call “culture.” “These conscious and unconscious patterns frame the ‘context’ for individuals to perceive, interact, and learn about the world” (Ibarra 1999: 2).

“Low” is not pejorative term; as low is neither good nor bad. Rather, it is a descriptive term that denotes that fewer elements are needed to accomplish the same objective. “High” and “Low” are on binary scale with midpoint representing the synthesis or multicontextuality. The HC/LC table describes leadership characteristics that should be taken into account when working with populations similar to those of the ES cohort. Participants can communicate their hopes, dreams, beliefs, and reactions through multicontextual interactions. These interactions include direct and specific language.





**Figure 20.** *Leadership and Context Diversity. (See Ibarra 2005 for structure prototype.)*

By focusing on tangible benefits to their everyday lives, programs such as SOMOS ES can attract leaders to its programs. Rather than presenting it as an individual act, leadership can be showcased as a way to support families and communities. This way it reflects the values of its participants. Further, in the development of leadership, individuals embody an attitude of change that continues into multiple situations, not just

those presented in the sessions.

## **Community Development**

Aside from identifying successes related to the overall model of the program, I identified components that either added or decreased the affect of the program.

Community development is understood to mean “improve[ing] ... living conditions and ways of life” (Bhattacharyya 1995: 60). Bhattacharyya (1995) encourages researchers to use “agency” and “solidarity” as key units of analysis when studying community development. He defines solidarity as “shared identity and a code of conduct” and agency as the “capacity to create, reproduce, change, and live according to their own meaning systems, the powers effectively to define themselves as opposed to being defined by others” (1995:61). Couched in human development, solidarity and agency create and further develop people’s choices and capabilities. The three overlapping principles for community development thus are self-help, felt need, and participation. I further explored community development defined as solidarity and agency with examples from the ES training pertaining to food, program stipend, curriculum structure, and seed imagery.

### *A Comer y Conectar: Food Connections*



*Figure 21. Meal times during the ES sessions*



In designing the sessions, Aryeh and I were intentional about providing lunch for participants and their children. Based on Aryeh's experience working with the organization, if she provided food, she could secure participants. However, the connections through food extended beyond receiving a meal. The participants used meal times as a way to connect and engage in personal conversations. Not having to prepare meals in advance, participants dedicated their time to other tasks such as leaving the house clean, tending to errands, and decreasing the list of duties for the day. Additionally by SOMOS providing lunches, participants had access to an assortment of foods not otherwise available to them. Meals were provided by a locally owned and family-operated small catering business that specializes in healthy Mexican food. The menus ranged from *quesadillas* to *ceviche*. All participants were happy to have fresh fruits and vegetables as part of every meal. These dishes seemed to be the most coveted components of the meal. Since no clear guidelines or rules were given prior to meals, participants at the front of the line took large amounts, leaving little to no fresh fruits and vegetables for those at the end of the line. Those at the end of the line were upset by this pattern. On one occasion, Jiscela, exercising her leadership, announced that participants should take proportional amounts to ensure everyone a fair portion.

*¡Yo Traigo!* : Stipend Use as an example of Agency

Participants received a stipend of \$50.00 at the end of the program for participating in the training sessions. During the post program interviews, I asked participants to share their thoughts about the stipend. All participants noted the benefit of the training session. Many said that the stipend was not necessary and that they would

sign up again for the session even if it had not included a stipend. However, when I asked what the stipend meant to them or how they utilized the stipend, participant responses revealed much more.

Amelida noted that she did not need a stipend to do the training. “Oh no, I did not do it for the money.” However, later she noted that for birthdays and special occasions she would ask her husband for cash and not for presents.

I like to have my own money. I’ll do odd jobs like cleaning jobs to make extra money. If I have money, I do not have to ask my husband for it. I do not like asking him for money. If I want a *paleta* (Popsicle) or *churro* (Mexican pastry), *pans* (sweatpants) or anything, ¡*Yo traigo!* [I have it!].

Undoubtedly, Amelida joined the program for her desire to learn and improve, yet having the stipend allowed for an added sense of autonomy. The statement “¡*Yo traigo!*” was a proud affirmation of ability to provide for herself. “Acting on something that people have control over is exactly the kind of thing that contributes to people’s beliefs that they are creative, knowledgeable, and capable of making a difference in their own lives” (McIntyre 2005: 40). Amelida felt proud and capable. She enjoyed having the option to decide on her own.

For others, the stipend served as a justification for her involvement with SOMOS. Jiscela shared that she often had to explain the need to travel to the training and attend events with the organization. “I tell my husband that they are giving me a stipend. It’s \$50 for gas. It’s not coming out of my pocket.” She could make the argument that she was not losing anything by attending the program. All her costs would be reimbursed by the stipend. It seemed that using shared family resources like gas money for personal development was not an investment that all family members supported. Yet, as long as

her involvement did not cost her anything, she could attend. Because she was receiving a stipend, Jiscela had the option of joining the ES cohort.

For Tania, the stipend was an honor. “I feel important...like I work there.” Although she understood that she was not an employee of the organization, the stipend directly linked her to the organization. She was proud that the organization decided to invest in her. Tania shared that several months preceding the training she had been struggling with family issues and an episode of depression that prevented her from leaving her home for several days. Now, even if at times she doubted her abilities to lead, knowing that SOMOS had chosen her to do this work gave her encouragement to continue.

Lorena decided not to take the stipend. She decided to contribute it back to the organization. She felt as if she had received multiple benefits from the organization already. She wanted to ensure that others in the community could benefit from as many resources as possible. Lorena had never donated to the organization before. Although she was one of the few participants with stable employment, she had not benefited from an additional income source until she was offered the stipend. For Lorena, the stipend provided her with the opportunity to be part of something bigger. She was able to “pay it back” to the organization that supported her development and to “pay it forward” to support someone else in the community through the services found at SOMOS.

For Victoria, the stipend was money that she had carefully factored into her budget. Victoria had recently separated from her husband. She had no other income except for the child support payments for her two young daughters. The stipend was a

way for her to contribute financially to her fragile household economy. She had planned to use the money to purchase back-to-school items for her daughters. Although the child support she received covered the basic needs for her daughters, it did not allow for small luxuries. Her daughters looked forward to new pencils and backpacks with their favorite cartoon icons. Victoria used the surplus funds for other household needs.

These examples illustrate that a stipend is more than just a financial compensation for participation. A stipend is an affirmation of spirit, a justification for service, a motivating force, an investment in the future and a needed resource. For the women participating in the training, the stipend was an opportunity and an exercise in their own decision-making. This choice was one that they often did not have previously. Symbolically, the stipend was recognition of their efforts or desires to take action to improve the Mayfair community. Although the women in this program were not expecting any direct financial gain, the stipend provided an opportunity for them to exert a sense of agency. They alone decided how the money would be spent.

#### Social Justice Education model

The way the sessions were conducted was just as important as the content that they contained. According to Fetterman (2001), empowerment processes have at their core a foundation of self-determination, defined as the ability to chart one's own course in life. The sessions supported participants to gain control, obtain needed resources, and critically understand one's social environment. (A related measures t-test was used to measure the following statement after the session: I am empowered and encouraged to solve problems on my own, I understand how to set goals and priorities to make

something happen, I know how to access power, I can identify inequalities in my everyday life,  $p < 0.05$ .) Furthermore, Fetterman mentions that a process is empowering if it develops a person's ability to become an independent problem-solver and decision maker.

ES had clear examples of how this model of empowerment and social justice would be implemented throughout the training. The use of a facilitator versus an instructor was mentioned throughout the participant interviews. They noted that this met their needs to share and interact. This approach provided the space to do so, even if limited to the sessions. The conversations made them feel part of the group. The group discussions allowed them to acknowledge that they had something valuable to share. In the closing comments of her interview, Lorena recalled, "we needed more time, more time to share, to talk."

Participants are rarely in spaces that valued their perspective. Isaura recalls that before the training she had a difficult time speaking in front of a group. After the training however, she felt confident in doing so. Other participants who know her commented regarding how well she was able to express herself, an accomplishment that she accepted proudly. Another participant stated,

*No nos dieron como en la escuela en México... como "bla bla bla bla" y "lo que yo digo eso es" y no te toman en cuenta si tu tienes otro punto de vista o si tu sabes bien que lo que el maestro está diciendo es erróneo y tratas de ponerlo lo que es no "pero no me importa aquí esto se ve azul, yo lo pongo verde porque yo digo verde" ... "yo soy la que manda aquí." No actuaron con el "poder sobre" si no con. Todos podíamos opinar y tener o no la razón y era un aprendizaje colectivo. (They did not give it to us like school in Mexico... like blah, blah, blah and "what I say goes" and they do not take you into consideration when you have a different point of view or when you know that he is saying something wrong and you try to correct it, but it is "I do not care if this looks blue, I make it blue*

because I say it is blue” or “I am the one who rules here.” They did not act with “power-over” they used “[power]-with.” Everyone could share their opinion and be in the right or not. It was a collective learning. )

Bhattacharyya (1995: 63) reminds us that, “in the broadest sense [participation] means taking part in the production of collective meaning and not the exclusion from it.”

I recommend enhancing this program by further developing the group agreements and implementing theater activities, especially imagery exercises during lessons. Instead of setting ground rules that require enforcement, the use of working agreements can create an egalitarian space. This allows those in the room to engage in self-examination and create conditions for participation with the group. The group should be discouraged from naming the ambiguous terms of “respect” and “order.” I encourage further probing into the meaning of respect and inviting participants to describe their expectations. The goal is to create a unique and distinct understanding with each group. Keeping messages positive can facilitate this process. Avoid using “no” and “don’ts.”

The curriculum included several theater and imagery activities. Participants felt confident and capable in the exercises that included a theater component. “*Me la creí, soy líder* (I believed it. I am a leader),” Lorena said of the superhero exercise. Others felt connected to each other. They were emotional during the *Ojos Brillantes* activity as they looked into each other’s eyes. In cultivating new leaders, the work of SOMOS ES rebuilt broken spirits and raised self-esteem. Several participants noted the following:

*Muchas mujeres por violencia verbal y domestica se sienten que no valen nada. Tiene el autoestima bien bajo. Y aquí (en SOMOS) yo he conocido a personas que viene y que les ayudan. Que saben que valen, como mujeres, como seres humanos, como madres. (Many women because of verbal or domestic violence feel worthless. Their self esteem is very low. Here [at SOMOS], I have known people who come for help, and they help them. They know their value as women,*

as human beings, as mothers.)

*Que bueno que hay organizaciones como esta que nos ayudan a salir adelante.* (I am glad that there are organizations like this that help us continue forward.)

*Aprendí que todos témenos voz, Y que no tememos miedo de hablar. Tenemos que aprender a defendernos de quien sea y a luchar por lo que queremos... Todavía puedo hacer muchas cosas.* (I learned that everyone has a voice, and we are not afraid to talk. We have to learn to defend ourselves against anyone and fight for what we want...I still can do so much.)

*Me miran como líder en la familia porque todos vienen conmigo y todo. 'Mira pasa esto, pasa l'otro que hago, pasa esto' y me miran a mí como un pilar. Que si ese pilar se mueve o se cai, todos se van a caer conmigo.* (They look at me like a leader in the family because everyone comes to me and everything. 'Look that this happened, what should I do or this other happened', and they look at me like a pillar. If this pillar moves or falls, everyone will fall with me.)

“One reason for the effectiveness is that visual, hands-on activities can equalize the relationship between literate and illiterate, between the marginalized and self-confident” (McIntyre 2008: 21). Leadership programs that address the need to make participants feel capable and confident while sharing pertinent content create a space where women can begin to believe in their own power.

Lastly, the program can be enriched further by intentionally transforming space. Especially since the sessions were one to two weeks apart, the use of decorations that differ from the everyday look of the office can enhance the curriculum. This decor can underscore the distinctive and unique quality of the group's time together. The display of previous work, photographs, and program-specific decoration create the feeling that something momentous is occurring. This reinforces a message of continuity, session after session.

### Content-focus vs. action-focus

The program provided participants a content-rich curriculum on power, schools, and health, environment and production systems. It offered participants the opportunity to explore the mission of the larger organization. However, they were not asked to share ideas about how to promote the work done by SOMOS. The options to join the cultural activism group, the community organizing or promotoras group only occurred at the end of the program. These opportunities could have been embedded earlier in the program and with more frequency. The use of scenarios could have been a more useful tool in deepening the connection between content and action. For example, in the story of Juan, the child who was not succeeding in school, the scenario could be posed “if you were a *promotora*, what issue might you explore? If you were a cultural activist, what might you present? If you were a community organizer, what issues might be important?” Having participants work in groups, tackle these questions and then present ideas to the large group reinforces opportunities to participate beyond the training. It allows individuals to test ideas, engaging in new ways of doing and thinking. By including several action-based activities, ES can cement the idea that this training opportunity is only a first step; more in-depth content can be obtained through other opportunities offered by SOMOS.

Through the training, many participants began to see themselves as leaders in their families and beyond. At first, the women were unsure if their home leadership could be a bridge to a community role. With the use of imagery, action-based training focused on community work, participants can expand the boundaries of individual leadership beyond the household. Blackwell (2012:27) demonstrates this bridging in her study of



*lideres campesinas* (women farmworker leaders).

Philosophy of leadership includes the profound work of inspiring self-esteem by helping women recognize their own inherent leadership skills. When new women enter the group, they are asked, “Who here in this group is a leader?” When the new women do not respond, a facilitator will ask the women, “Well, have you organized a *quinciñera*?” As many women have organized a *quinciñera* (or another large family event), the facilitator will point out, “Well, then, of course you are a leader; you have already demonstrated your leadership skills.”

Through ES, the women in these thresholds of leadership were supported, encouraged, and reminded of their incredible accomplishments thus far. They were supported in their ability to create changes, large and small. For example, members changed their household habits as a result of a session explaining the environmental crisis. (A related t-test measure was used to analyze the following statement: I can identify solutions to the ecological crisis,  $p < 0.05$ .) One woman began composting, another started recycling, and yet another stopped using disposable plates and utensils. However, participants could identify only limited community efforts to address the ecological crisis. The facilitators could have used examples from small local policy measures that have been successful in other communities. They can present non-policy measures that include setting community and neighborhood expectations. Although it is important for participants to start with the immediate changes in their homes, as a group the women should be encouraged to begin to explore their potential influences in larger arenas.

#### *Semilla y Siembra: Seed imagery & Expectations*

The seed imagery seemed to appeal to all participants. They understood this

training as a small step in their larger development. However, making expectations clear in collaborative, social justice work is important. It is imperative that programs do not set unrealistic expectations of success for participants. Some gains might be immediate; however, most sustainable community change requires long-term commitment.

The seed imagery used in the following passages identifies the need to start the work, maintain the work, even if at the end individuals might not personally reap the benefits. By using seed imagery and discourse throughout the sessions, the facilitator can reinforce the messages that continual work from participants is needed in order to achieve larger goals. Below is a sampling of seed quotes from various community and literary works that can be used to reinforce concepts of solidarity and agency.

*En la vida, cada persona toma una de dos actitudes: la de construir o la de sembrar. Los que construyen podrán tomar años en sus labores pero un día, ellos terminan lo que hacen. Luego se encuentran rodeados de sus propias paredes. La vida pierde su significado cuando paran de construir.*

*Luego hay los que siembran. Ellos perduran en tormentas y con todos los altibajos de las temporadas, y ellos raramente descansan. Pero a diferencia de los edificios, un jardín nunca para de crecer. Y mientras esto requiere la atención constante del jardinero, también permite que la vida del jardinero sea una gran aventura.*

(In life each person can take one of two attitudes: to build or to plant. The builders might take years over their tasks, but one day, they finish what they are doing. Then they find they are hemmed in by their own walls. Life loses its meaning when the building stops.

Then there are those who plant. They endure storms and all the many vicissitudes of the seasons, and they rarely rest. But unlike a building, a garden never stops growing. And while it requires the gardener's constant attention, it also allows life for the gardener to be a great adventure) (Coelho 2008: xii).

*Plantamos las semillas que algún día brotarán.  
Regamos las semillas que ya han sido plantadas,*

*sabiendo que contienen una promesa futura.  
Echamos los cimientos que necesitarán posterior desarrollo.  
Proveemos la levadura que produce efectos más allá de nuestras aptitudes.  
No podemos hacer todo,  
y al darnos cuenta de ello nos sentimos liberados.  
Eso nos permite hacer algo y hacerlo muy bien.  
Será incompleto pero es un comienzo,  
un paso a lo largo del camino,  
y una oportunidad para que la gracia del Señor aparezca y haga el resto.  
Quizá nunca veremos los resultados finales.  
Pero ahí está la diferencia entre el maestro de obras y el albañil.  
Somos albañiles, no maestros de obra, ministros, pero no Mesías.  
Somos los profetas de un futuro que no es el nuestro.*

(We plant seeds that one day will grow.  
We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.  
We lay foundations that will need further development.  
We provide yeast that produces effects beyond our capabilities.  
We cannot do everything  
and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.  
This enables us to do something,  
and to do it very well.  
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,  
an opportunity for God's grace to enter and do the rest.  
We may never see the end results,  
but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.  
We are workers, not master builders,  
ministers, not messiahs.  
We are prophets of a future not our own) (The Romero Prayer).

However, seed imagery has its strengths and weaknesses. Participants with connections to the land best receive this imagery. Several of the participants expressed this linkage. During their childhood in Mexico, they harvested produce with their families. They learned to tend to the land and value the harvest from an early age. They also recognized how challenging it is to feel connected to that agricultural process living in an urban setting such as the Mayfair neighborhoods. For those farther removed from agricultural experiences, excursions to urban farms such as Veggielution become much

more necessary.

Additionally, facilitators run the risk of becoming too attached to the metaphor. In this attachment, participants might be tempted to romanticize the agricultural lifestyle. Participants can become entrenched in nostalgic sentiments of a time that no longer exists, even in their homelands. As the exercise in Session #5 showed, subsistence farming has become much more complicated.

For now, the seed metaphor seemed useful. In future years, as new generations become involved in the local leadership work of SOMOS, facilitators will need to reevaluate the metaphor and if needed replace it with one more culturally relevant.

### **Marginality**

When exploring the lives of women in this program, we must also remember to take into consideration all intersecting identities. Vigil (2003) addressed it in a *multiple marginality framework*. Multiple marginality framework provides a holistic strategy for inquiry into the history, lives, and decisions of individuals. For this group of women, I explored the factors behind their current state, and how their values can be part of changing the way they view themselves and the community around them. For example, the participants are women. In their daily lives as women, they see their role in their family and in the community in distinct ways than their male counterparts. The women are mothers, often taking care of their children, other neighborhood children and members of their extended family. These women have strong ties to Mexico. They inculcate Mexican values, language, and traditions in their children. They are immigrants, some who did not have full citizenship privileges; they felt disenfranchised

from the current political system.

In their homes, their husbands' need and those of their children come before their own needs. In their communities, neighbors undermine women's network building by calling them *chismosas* (gossipers) and *arguenderas* (troublemakers). Lorena commented that although her partner was supportive of her involvement, her family teased her often.

*Mi hermana a veces se ríe de mí y me dice, 'ya te vamos a ver con tu bordoncito en las marchas con tus signs y con [tu esposo] atrás de ti', y ellos se forman planes de ya reírse. (My sister sometimes laughs at me and tells me "we are going to see you with your walking stick at the marches with you signs and [your husband] behind you", and they continue on laughing.)*

Several other participants also expressed negative and unsupportive comments from husbands and family members.

*Lo que pasa es que mi esposo no me apoya mucho. A él no se le da eso. No hago más cosas porque él no me apoya. Si él me apoyara, ¡olvidate! (What happens is that my husband does not support my efforts. He is not like that. I do not do more because he does not support me. If he supported me, forget it!).*

To cope, participants keep their involvement with community work a secret.

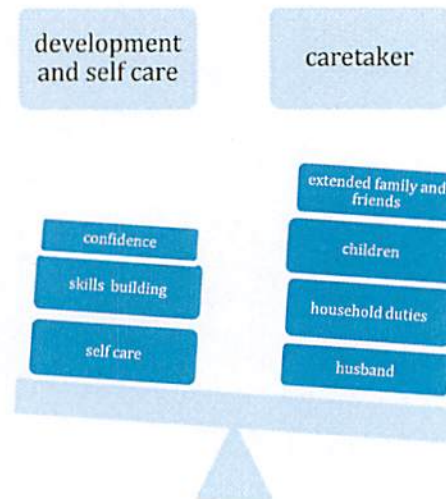
*No le dije a mi esposo porque siempre me critica. '¡Ay! ¡Ya vas con tus clases!' como un rechazo negativo. En vez de que me diga 'O si ve para que no estés aquí 'nomas viendo tele.' Me gusta que me motiven. El a veces— sus comentarios, me critica. (I did not tell my husband because he always criticizes me. Ay, there you go with your classes again, like a negative rejection. Instead of saying 'O yes go so that you are not stuck here watching TV.' I like to be motivated. He sometimes criticizes me.)*

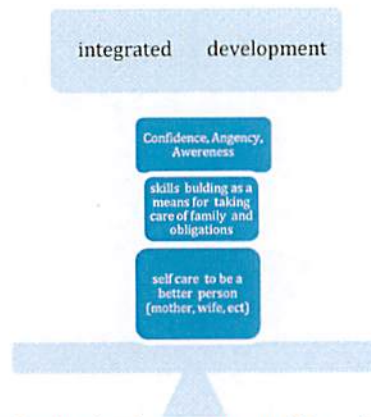
Several of the women did not have formal schooling and had limited English language capability. They did not feel confident speaking up in Spanish, and feel even more inhibited speaking English. Blackwell (2007) notes that the top barriers to participation that women face include a lack of childcare, no car or transportation and

partner resistance to participation. For women in the ES program, language and time restrictions were additional barriers for getting involved in larger community work.

*"Yo siempre pongo el obstáculo del ingles, porque entiendo un poquito. Pero no, no. Ya no me entra mucho el ingles...Tenia ganas de entra allí [promotora clases] pero cuando investigue que hay que ir todo el día entonces tenia que dejar el trabajo. Y no pues yo no puedo darme esas libertades por eso es que no entre allá."* (I always put English as an obstacle, because I understand a little. But no, I cannot learn much English...I wanted to join [promotora classes] but when I looked into it, you have to go all day and I would have to leave work. And well, I cannot take those liberties. That is why I did not join.)

They have been told to be humble, quiet, and obedient since childhood. If they were not, others consider them conceited and rude. So, when the women were asked to invest in their own development, challenges arose.





**Figure 22.** *Approaches to leadership development among ES participants. A: The detached approach present challenges to leadership development. B: The integrated approach facilitates leadership development opportunities.*

Women face several challenges to leadership development. They must often decide either to take care of household-related tasks or to take time away from home to learn new skills and information (see Figure 15). However, women can begin to reconcile between these two options. They can demonstrate the connection of these outside events to home life. Integrated models of development can support women in realizing that their actions of caretaking and self-development are not mutually exclusive. Organizations can also benefit from using integrated development models to explain the benefits of involvement to participants.

The need to better care for their families propelled the women to enrollment in ES. Following is a brief description of the participants' personal history and home life. In these descriptions I hope to illustrate the diversity of family structures and lived experiences.

Jiscela is a mother of three young children. Others in the group look up to her and often call her "licenciada" (graduate) since she attended college in Mexico. Her husband

is a college graduate. Her family recently moved out of the Mayfair area and into a larger home in a suburb just outside of San Jose.

Isaura is a mother of two young girls. She was fairly new to the organization. She described herself as an extremely shy and quiet person. Her main reason for participating in the program was to learn to be a better mother and support for her daughters.

Raquel has two daughters. She has not been active in the community until recently. She became involved after an incident with her daughter at school triggered a response. Raquel felt that the teacher was treating her daughter unfairly. She vowed to do whatever she could to never feel like she could not voice her concerns freely.

Amelida is a vocal and confident woman in the group. If she had an opinion, she did not hesitate to share it. However, she felt that she was not always able to be confident and expressive in larger groups. She was troubled by the lack of support from her family.

Cruz is a mother of five children. However, only two children attended the session with her, one boy and one girl. She described herself as someone who thoroughly enjoys learning. She has special needs children, and she was eager to learn about resources to support them in public school.

Nayeli is a mother of three. She is a long time resident of Mayfair. She previously participated in many of the programs offered by SOMOS. She was a member of the cultural activism group for three years.

Tania is a mother of two children. One child was a teenage girl in high school and the other a boy in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. She was invited to participate in the ES program after having participated in a nutrition workshop at Somos Mayfair. She suffered from



episodes of depression.

Lorena is a young immigrant woman. She was married but did not have children of her own. However, she served often as a caretaker for her nieces and nephews. She works full-time at a local non-profit organization. She has a strong command of the English language, yet she is most articulate in Spanish. She identifies strongly with Mexican traditions and family values.

Victoria is a young mother of two young girls. She was recently separated from her husband after enduring emotional, psychological, and physical abuse from him. She found out about the program from participating in the women's support group.

Adriana is a stay-at-home mother of three children. Her husband works and provides for the family. She recently joined SOMOS as a health promoter, and she enjoys feeling productive and being a part of something bigger.

#### *Tod@ Somos Lideres: Creating a Gendered –Model*

The participants in the program self-identified as Latinas, women, mothers, wives, and grandmothers. Their primary impetus for getting involved with SOMOS related to their roles as mothers and caretakers. Jiscela was upset because of the treatment her daughter received in school. Isaura wanted to improve the life of her daughters. Raquel wanted to work on her parenting skills and get her daughters back on track.

Yet traditionally, motherhood and womanhood are absent roles in understanding leadership. However, studies of women leaders (Blackwell 2007 and 2010; Bernal 1998; Garcia 1993; Moriarty 2006; Margret 1990; and Shell 2008) bring to light the multiple roles they play. Still, the participants had little knowledge of any female community

leaders who were from similar backgrounds or who were also mothers. During the second session, the women were asked to give examples of leaders. Participants listed notable leaders such as Cesar Chavez, Pope John Paul II, Mother Theresa, and President Obama. None of the people mentioned a similar lived experience to the women in the program. Yet, a plethora of examples of notable women leaders working toward community goals exists.

In creating women-centric, woman-positive spaces, training sessions should include stories that show participants as part of a larger legacy. Participants should be exposed to leaders who look like them. They should hear stories of those with similar backgrounds. Program facilitators can share examples of women who have confronted similar barriers yet continued to stay involved.

In the local community, leaders such as Dolores Huerta and former Supervisor Blanca Alvarado both identify as mothers working in the community for the betterment of their families. Both of their stories include raising children as single-mothers and tending to multiple responsibilities inside and outside of the home.

Supplemental materials such as books, pictures, and interviews can transform their perspective and include examples relevant to their lives. Some resources include the following:

1. *500 years of the Chicana Women's History* by Betita Martinez (a bilingual edition) (2008)
2. *Mujeres de Conciencia/Women of Conscience* by Victoria Alvarado (bilingual edition) (2009)
3. *Ethnic Community Builders: Mexican- Americans in Search of Justice and Power—The struggle for Citizenship Rights in San Jose, CA* by Francisco

Jimenez, Alma Martinez, and Richard A. Garcia (2007)

This book is in English but contains profiles of the following women:  
Blanca Alvarado, Esther Medina, Sofia Mendoza, Ernestina Garcia, Yolanda Reynolds, Mary Andrade, and Sister Gloria Loya PBVM.

4. *!Chicana Power!: Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement (Chicana Matters)* by Maylei Blackwell (2011)

*“Tienes que aceptar que como mujer, eres fuerte* (You have to accept that as a woman you are strong),” Jiscela reflected on her learning and leadership. However, some women are apprehensive calling themselves leaders. “Mujeres Fuertes” (see Appendix D, Activity #7) reinforces the value and strength of women. Examples of strong women can raise the self-esteem and present real life examples of women, stay-at-home mothers and single parents, who rose to leadership roles, with and without official titles. Included in the sample are notable Latina women who have done significant work in the community or have taken a prominent leadership role. In describing their contributions, I have also included descriptions about their identities as mothers. Also, I have included early childhood information that might reflect that of current participants. In the sample of noted women, I chose to include icons found in the Meso-American culture and mythology. These icons pre-date traditional leadership traits and remind participants of the strong female presence in Mexican history. These figures underscore the need to include the contributions of women in Spanish-speaking communities. Although Latina leaders play significant roles in local efforts, it is important to note that Latina leaders make contributions to national movements and global efforts.

Although participants interviewed several community leaders as part of the training program, not everyone was able to conduct an interview, and not all participants

were able to hear the stories of all the interviewees. If participants were to have had some group interaction either through a guest speaker or a panel of leaders, all participants could have walked away with new stories of women leaders as stated in the feedback. In addition, the writing and sharing of their own stories can cement participants' understanding of their leadership development, affirming their identity as leaders. "By learning about their histories and gaining new tools and access to available options, ... women are better able to confront the issues and conditions that limit their life possibilities" (Blackwell 2007: 8). In sharing their leadership story, it places their leadership within a specific context, embracing multiple identities.

As community educators in this community, we must be invested in sharing current Latina leadership stories. Either through oral histories, community profiles or literature, examples of Latina community grassroots leaders are absent from traditional, dominant discourse on leadership. Although some literature is emerging on female farmworkers (Blackwell 2007), little information is shared about women leaders in urban settings. Literary models like those used by Cisneros (1984) in *House on Mango Street* or Burciaga's *Drink Cultura* (1993) can situate relevant stories in a contemporary setting to promote these stories of leadership to larger audiences. Perhaps authors can create a new body of literature that captures stories or narratives of women leaders improving the community. These might include stories of mothers planning quinceañeras, women advocating for their children, and participants in local organizing campaigns. Activities that support this work include deep self reflection and taking inventory of identities, experiences, and talents. I include detailed descriptions and facilitator notes for these

types of activities in Appendix D.

As an additional note, the use of the “@” symbol is a stylistic, linguistic tool of Chicano Studies to represent the inclusion and distinction of women in this group. The “@” is used to dismantle language as male-centric discourse (Anzaldúa 1999: 54). “Tod@s” signals a conscientious departure from traditional views by announcing a politicized identity (Soto 2010).

#### *A la Escuela: Exploring Resources*

Living in low-income communities, the women in the program were used to limited resources. However, some resources do make a difference. Most of the women received extremely limited formal education. They were unfamiliar with learning environments. In the following section I expanded on observations and comments made about the physical space of the training sessions, the materials and supplies used (and not used), and management of the resources. Slight changes in these resources produced positive and negative effects on the learning environment.

#### **Spaces:**

Participants enjoyed the space that was used for the first session. They enjoyed the fact that it was a separate space. They focused and paid attention to the lesson of the day. The second location was acceptable to participants, but many noted that they did not have as much privacy as before. Staff and other community members often walked into the room. It was difficult to stay focused and engaged with the day’s events.

The path from the children’s area to the restroom was especially troublesome. Children waved to participants when they walked by, distracting all and worrying the

parent. On several occasions, the session was interrupted to accommodate catering staff setting-up for lunch. However, it was very important for participants to be near their children during the long days of training, at least within walking distance. The ideal location would have proximity with privacy.

Participants found the space challenging during the transition times, as well. Some participants were unclear what the responsibilities were for rearranging the room and setting up for lunch. They felt it was unfair; those who set up the room entered the lunch line late and did not always find a place to sit. Although they liked being able to eat with their children, sometimes they were unable to eat their own meal because they were tending to their children. The transition back to the training was delayed at times by women washing dishes and folding tables and chairs after lunch. Participants felt that even on the breaks they were working.

#### Markers and Supplies:

Participants enjoyed activities that included drawing, creating visuals, and working with groups. However under time constraints, participants were troubled, having limited working markers and insufficient supplies of paper. Amelida felt rushed. She was challenged, trying to figure out what to do and how to do it in a short period of time. It was even more frustrating to begin to build momentum during activity and realize that the markers were out of ink. One participant commented that she wanted a desk or table, something that would provide more support for writing during sessions. Since her binder was too flimsy, eventually she stopped taking notes.

Also, participants noted that they enjoyed having multiple visuals and

presentations. The PowerPoint presentation of the ecological crisis was the most memorable of the lessons because it included pictures. Even though the presentation contained a large amount of information, it was presented in a way that was easy to understand. (A related measures t-test was used to analyze the following statements: I can identify causes of the ecological crisis,  $p < 0.05$ .) The visual representations left an impression on the participants. On the contrary, printed material was not always accurate or easy to follow. When reading curriculum documents, participants were often confused by the manner in which they were written. The facilitator had to explain the activities several times.

Participants were also challenged by the inconsistency of supplies. On the first day, participants were given a packet to put in their binders. On subsequent days, they were given sheets as the day progressed, yet some of the evaluation worksheets were already in the binder. In the future a more consistent process could be implemented. For example, participants could routinely receive all the session materials at the beginning to be placed in the binder, rather than having the items dispersed throughout the session. Additionally, the purpose of the binder was unclear. A review portion at the beginning or at the end of each session can clarify the purpose of the binder and reinforce lessons. The facilitator might also consider including tabs and dividers to support participants organizing their handouts. Since participants' lives are hectic and constantly changing, consistency in the training becomes even more essential.

Time:

The women were always pressed for time in their daily routines. As one

participant commented, “*Yo no me puedo quedar sentada. ¡Siempre ando en friega!*” (I cannot stay seated. I’m always on the go!). The mixing of the two schedules, weekend and weekday, left some women more stressed than others on certain days. For women who were stay-at-home mothers, the weekday sessions were best. This allowed them to take children to school and still complete their household duties. Since most of their husbands were at work, they did not need to tend to other matters, nor did they have to explain their absences from the home. However, for those who worked, sessions during the day often meant that they had an extra long and busy day or that they needed to trade shifts with co-workers. Cruz admitted that sometimes she came to the sessions with “*mentiritas en el trabajo* (little lies at work).” Saturdays worked for most but still, the women were responsible for completing all their “regular” tasks before they could dedicate themselves to something else. Participants mentioned that it was helpful to have all the session information in advance, but many wished that all the sessions had taken place either all on a Saturday or all during the week.

#### Food:

Few participants and children did express some challenges with certain meal options. Sometimes children showed disinterest regarding some foods such as peppers even if they were not spicy. During the lunch when *ceviche* was served for lunch, Isaura voiced her concern. “I had some shrimp last month that was bad, and I was sick for a week. I need to go out and buy something because I do not want my girls to take that risk.” Isaura’s comments, beyond a critique of the meal, give us a glimpse into the challenges these families have in accessing fresh food and food that has been handled



properly, a heightened risk in marginalized communities.

### **Social networks and relationships**

This project also pertains to neighborhood change and community development. Anthropologists have been involved in community work in two main ways: tracking structural neighborhood changes and analyzing social capital and community building (Hyland and Brimhall 2005). In the latter, anthropologists, measure variables related to networking, political participation and activism, and group activities. Due to the seminal book, *Bowling Alone* (Putnam 2000), literature on these topics has increased. However, in diverse areas, social scientists face challenges describing and confining ambiguous terms such as community.

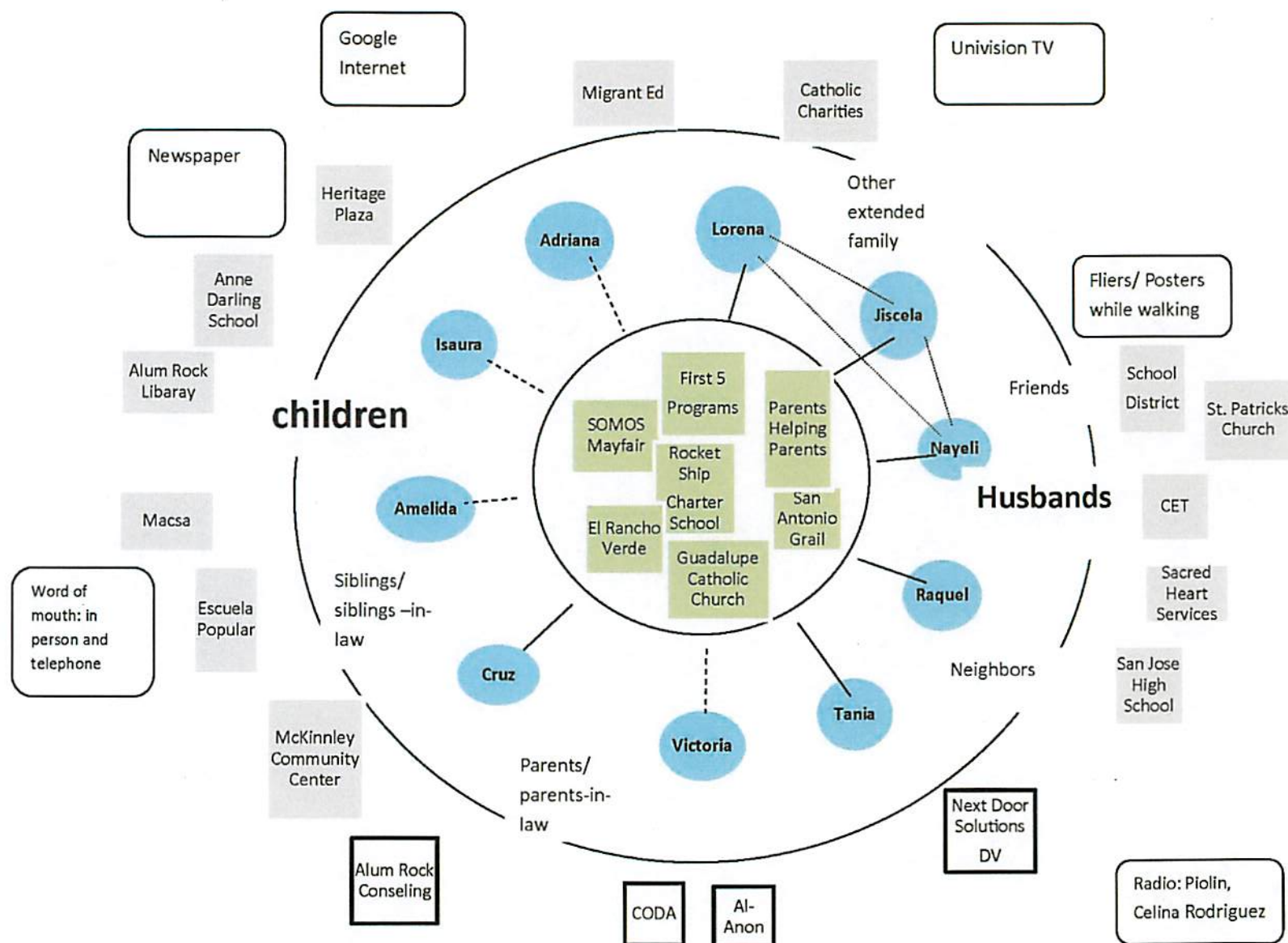
For this exploration of social capital, I focus my attention on individuals and their ties to other individuals and organizations (Brisson 2009; Granovetter 1983; Cattell 2004; Hackenberg and Hackenberg 2004; Pontes 2000; and, Pontes and Landolt 2000). Although networks are ways to show groups and community connections, individuals make choices to create linkages, bonds and bridges. “Whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to the properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals - social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (Putnam 2000: 19). Additionally social capital is “bonds of solidarity within a given community” (Pontes and Landolt, 2000:546). Brisson (2009) further notes that when using social capital as an intervention to poverty in low-income neighborhoods, we must pay particular attention to the following three forms of capital: informal bonding with neighborhoods, formal bonding with neighbors

through established structures, and formal bridging with individual and organizations outside of the neighborhood.

The most direct way to study a community is to analyze the ties and patterns that link its residents (Wellman 1983). One of the most useful tools in network analysis is network mapping (Pinsker and Lieber 2005). Network mapping is used to identify and visually display the actual social networks and resources used by a particular person or organization.

The social networking exercise demonstrated the ways that ES participants were connected. The participants in the program were already connected with at least one other service offered by SOMOS Mayfair, in addition to other local agencies. More than half of participants were able to list several community agencies that they contacted regularly to obtain information or services. They often visited libraries, public schools, and non-profits as information hubs. However, relationships were only sustained relevant to the services provided. In other words, they held weak ties to the people in the organization but strong ties to the organizations themselves. The women knew the staff members based solely on their position in the organization and were not connected to the individual. When the staff members moved on, the relationship was transferred to the new staff member. Relationships did not extend beyond these service-based transactions or outside of the scope of the resource center. They maintained relationships with organizations that meet their current level of need. By only connecting to individuals in this way, they did not tap into that social capital opportunity.

Figure 23. Participants' network map



“Social capital supports learning through interaction, and requires the formation of networking paths that are both horizontal (across agencies and sectors) and vertical (agencies to communities to individuals)” (Allen, et al. n.d.). Most participants had robust networks of individuals and organizations. However, the participants’ access to information and resources were limited to that which was also accessible to their peers and maintained their status. Formal bonding with neighbors did not occur through government sponsored groups but rather support group, social action committees, and other community services.

A large percentage of the participants were involved in informal bonding with neighbors, family, and friends. They spoke to other mothers on their way to the school or at community events. They held informal meetings in apartment complexes, school yards, and parks. The women were also informal bridges to community resources. They share information about services for others in the community. Raquel recalls,

*A veces por ejemplo que me habla alguien, ‘Oyes como le hago para hacer una carta para un niño que tengo con educación especial y que no me hacen caso en la escuela y no sé qué.’ Como ven que yo ando en la escuela mucho con mis niños porque tengo 3 niños con educación especial y este, ya hablo con ellas, les doy una copia [de informes] de porque yo tengo el manual, o así información a donde ir a pedir comida o información por si necesitan alguna ayuda. Los mando así a donde yo me ayudaron antes. Ahora me gusta dar la información que yo tengo. (Sometimes, for example, they call me and say ‘Hey how do I write a letter because I have a child with special needs, and they are not giving me the attention at the school and I do not know.’ Since they see that I am involved at the school and have 3 kids with special needs, I talk to them, make them copies [of the information] because I have a manual and like that information about where to get food or information that they need to find help. I refer them to where I have gone for help. Now I like to share information that I have.)*

The women were called upon to take care of children, provide transportation and give moral support to family members, neighbors and friends. They also shared resources

about substance abuse, domestic violence and mental health services, in addition to general marriage, family, and parenting advice.

This interaction created a strain on individuals who were bridging resources but had a flat personal social network; sharing of resources was a one-way exchange. As stated earlier, the participants were typically the most involved and informed on community resources. This was especially stressful for participants dealing personally with traumas such as domestic violence or mental health problems.

During the training sessions, participants missed entire or partial sessions to deal with outside commitments. Adriana left to sign a car loan for her husband. Raquel continuously rescheduled the evaluation session to tend to family obligations such as taking her brother who lived in Morgan Hill to Costco so he could purchase needed household items. Nayeli missed an entire session because her daughter was ill; she later had doubts about returning to the group. The women seemed conflicted with their time at the sessions since they were constantly called on to care for others. Yet, they also understood that not investing in their own learning could cost them in the end.

“Inequitable access to political –economic wealth and power is perceived by Chicana critics not only as a byproduct of racism and sexism but also as a byproduct of class oppression” (Kafka 1993:xiv). As such, women find it challenging to reach beyond the daily tasks and plan a more stable, sustainable path toward empowerment.

Neighborhood-based programs such as ES are limited in their scope. Their geographic boundaries exclude opportunities to expose participants to new and different environments. They did not intentionally work with residents to creating formal bridges

with new communities and services outside of the neighborhood. Many of the programs offered by SOMOS were geographically centered; all the work was being done in the local neighborhood. Yet, the women traveled throughout the city and beyond city limits in search of resources. They traveled to churches, libraries, and service centers outside of the Mayfair area. Programs can build on existing networks to help participants understand larger social landscapes and support their involvement in formal community bridging. Additionally, one participant no longer lived in the Mayfair community but felt deeply connected to the mission and vision of the organization.

Expectations and workloads for these women are extremely high. They rose to the occasion often with limited resources and overcame a plethora of barriers. Networks that provide access to new resources and tools to face these challenges are thus that much more valuable for the women of Mayfair. However, facilitators with populations similar to those of Mayfair must make explicit the benefits of increasing social capital through expanding networks.

## **CHAPTER 6: REFLECTIONS**

With any program or training, we must ask how it changes the lives of the individuals involved and how it will affect the overall dynamics of the community. In doing so we must also explore the strengths, challenges, and limitations of this work. As anthropologists, we must acknowledge that we too are part of the social interaction and are changed by it. The following are my questions related to the leadership development of Spanish-speaking women and my reflections as a Latina graduate student involved in this work.

The participants in this program were exclusively women and almost exclusively mothers. Kafka (2000) discusses the inequitable gendered power relationships Latina women experience. They experience gender and race discrimination from multiple groups. Anglo males have disparaging views of Latinas due to their race and gender. Anglo women who have adopted Anglo men's values perceive Latinos (male and female) negatively on the basis of their race. Latino men, although they share a cultural connection with Latinas, consider women a lesser gender. Additionally, I posit that Latina women experience discrimination from all groups, including other Latinas, who give power to traditional patriarchal and misogynistic standpoints. So, what does it mean for SOMOS Mayfair to engage in leadership development with this group? Women within this cultural context face deep challenges. Leaders in this community must become aware of their identity and the inherent socio-cultural barriers. Practitioners in grassroots leadership development work must be cognizant of the complex reality of identity politics in their local setting.

Given these barriers, what are realistic expectations of the participants post-training to be involved in the work at SOMOS? How can women reach upward mobility when they are continuously stretched thin? What tools can we equip them with to understand, explain, and defend their position with spouses, family, friends, and the large community? As was observed in comments during the graduation ceremony, husbands who were present were shocked that their wives were doing something of substance. They assumed that the sessions were more about *chisme* (gossip) and *comadriando* (women's gathering) and less about leadership development and community work. So, how can these women believe in their ability to make a difference when they are continuously undermined in the process by family and partners? Additionally, for those who do believe in their ability to improve their community, how can they change the dominant mind sets in their families, communities, and society to allow them to do so? When the last session of ES concluded, participants did not have a clear vision of how the group would stay connected. No date was set for a reunion; a follow up meeting was not scheduled. With looming budget cuts, program staff was uncertain whether or not a second cohort of ES would be possible. Although as a one-time leadership program ES provided benefits to participants. Long-lasting leadership programs have the potential of providing exponential community benefits, establish a foundation for future efforts, and strengthen networks among local leaders. ES has the potential to do this.

As most of the women are mothers of young children, future studies should focus on the impact of the women's involvement in the community on their families. This research might include interviews to include viewpoints from their husbands, children,



and extended family. Researchers could explore relevant questions on how the involvement by women in community leadership roles has affected the power dynamics in the household. They might consider the following questions:

1. How have new ideas and processes of learning leadership change household life?
2. What additional challenges and barriers do women and families face when they become deeply involved in community work?
3. What new forms of doing or thinking about community work emerge when more women are involved?
4. How does this impact the overall structure or direction of community organizations such as SOMOS?

This experience as Latina graduate student was quite enlightening. Although I have several privileges such as a secure full-time employment, I face multiple barriers. My family often questioned my motives for continuing my education. They probed regarding the amount of money I spend on tuition, books, and other resources. They interrogated me about when I would begin to have children and how much of my time was spent on my studies, meanwhile neglecting my home.

I spent over two years producing this report. The first semester after the project was implemented I was exhausted from two and a half years of taking a full load of classes while also working fulltime. After finishing my coursework, I was ready for a break. The following semester, as I began to write my report, I confronted a series of emotional events, including having my laptop stolen, supporting my *comadre* (close friend) through cancer diagnosis and treatment, and coming out to my parents. When I finally restored my data and secured the needed resources, I continued to be pulled in multiple directions.

I found it challenging to schedule time to write. My work deadlines and other

commitments took precedent. At times, I felt that the needs of my partner, family, and friends were more urgent than mine. I rationalized my situation; I trivialized my looming task. All I had to do was write a project report, while others were confronting significant life-altering situations. It was easier for me to help others in their hour of need. I was taking on my role as caretaker and putting others' needs before my own. At the end of my day, after supporting multiple people and projects, I had little energy to complete the tasks related to my report.

I needed support in completing this work. However, it was difficult to share my needs with others. I am the person in my network that others turn to for information and resources. I am often the one engaging in bridge-building between communities. I was conflicted by my predicament. I felt as if those in my family and home networks would look at me in disdain for having these challenges; why could I not just do this? Would they judge me for not being able to complete this? In pursuing a graduate degree, how could I possibly feel anything other than privileged? I felt embarrassed to share these challenges with my professional networks. I did not want them to see me as unintelligent or weak. Would they understand, or care to understand, the challenges I was facing? Additionally, I doubted my ability to complete this work. I had internalized feelings of inferiority as a first generation Chicana, female, queer graduate student. I, like the women participants of ES, questioned my identity as a leader. For me, leadership was situated in university life; for them, it was situated in the community of Mayfair. The impacts of racism, sexism, and classism are pervasive. Yet, we both learned that to make an impact in our families and our communities, the development begins with us.

Through this project, it became evident that there is a need for more women to take leadership roles in the community and elsewhere. We must invest in our own preparation for our well-being and that of our families and neighborhoods. However, we confront several obstacles in developing our leadership. *Tod@s estamos en la lucha.* (We are all part of this struggle.)

## CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

In the *Mapa de Cuauhtinchan*, a rare document providing a view of indigenous community struggle in the sixteenth century, scholars are interpreting the origin, migration, and foundation story imprinted on it. "It begins with a scene of emergence from the primordial 'place of the seven caves' from which their ancestors were born" (McDowell 2004). David Carrasco claims (audience talkback, January 13, 2012), that the one who is leading the people out of the caves and toward a new future is Itzpapalotl, the obsidian butterfly, the woman warrior. Icons and examples of women leaders are present in Meso-American history and Latino communities. Yet today, Latina women struggle to find representative images in community leadership discourse.

In the ethnographic evaluation of ES, a grassroots leadership development program serving Spanish-speaking women in East San Jose, I provided curriculum notes for future programs, as well as identified key factors regarding community development, marginality and social capital. Through participant-observation and interviews, I discerned strengths and challenges of the current curriculum and presented participant viewpoints on community leadership. By conducting an exercise in network mapping, I revealed their ties with organizations and individuals in the community through an assessment of their social capital in the Mayfair community. The results from program surveys underscored the key lessons imparted to participants through this training. As a lesson learned in qualitative evaluation, "we never believe that we know the questions, but rather that our respondents will, if allowed, tell or show us the important issues if we give them the opportunity in the right context" (Crain and Tashima 2004:47).

Like those who have been involved previously in transformative applied and action anthropology, “I have learned the importance of cocreating spaces with marginalized groups where they can speak their stories into life; where they are free to choose-authentically and for themselves, individually, and in the context of mutual participation—how to take actions that will improve their current situation” (McIntyre 2008: xvii). Combining models in multiple fields, I was able to provide tools that can better support leadership development and can situate it in a multicontextual setting.

In the end, this project was successful in providing solutions for current challenges faced by organizations involved in community leadership development programs, and it produced research to understand the population being served by these initiatives. As an emergent anthropologist, I have succeeded in “[m]aking the invisible visible, bringing the margin to the center, rendering the trivial important, [and] putting the spotlight on women as competent actors” (McIntyre 2008: 3-4). This work was about building relationships between theory and practice in a concrete, situated community environment and recognizing contemporary cultural understandings. It was also about reflecting on my experience as a participant of the evaluation process.

Although women, especially those who live and work in the Mayfair community, confront intersecting oppressions and byproducts of that oppression daily, they are resilient. Beyond resilient, they are hopeful and determined. They continue to be committed to improving the lives of their children and families. Their daily struggle is a “passive resistance” (Burciaga 1993: 57). Through programs like ES, they transition from this passivity to a more active resistance and transformation.

In doing so, individuals can and often do create change. Despite their situation, these women, mothers, continuously strive for a better life and break barriers along their path. Anthropologists can and must be involved in community development and program development to document the experience of participants. We all share in the responsibility to make our communities better. *Tod@s somo lideres; tod@s somos Mayfair (We are leaders; we are Mayfair).*

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## Appendix A Interview Protocol

### **SOMOS Mayfair Escuela Siembra—Developing Community Leadership in Mayfair** **SOMOS Mayfair Escuela Siembra – Desarrollando Liderazgo comunitario en Mayfair**

#### Goal

#### Meta

1. The goal is to provide a context based on qualitative data for the interpretation of quantitative data on leadership development in the Mayfair area.

1. La meta es de proporcionar un contexto basado en datos cualitativos para la interpretación de datos cuantitativos del desarrollo de liderazgo en el área Mayfair.

The objectives are to:

Los objetivos son:

1. Obtain a deep, rich description of the interviewee's experience with SOMOS Mayfair;

1. Obtener una descripción profunda y detallada de la experiencia del entrevistado con SOMOS Mayfair

2. Obtain a better context for understanding community based leadership development among community stakeholders.

2. Obtener un mejor contexto comprensivo basado en el liderazgo comunitario entre los residentes de la comunidad.

3. Obtain information on structural and cultural factors that facilitate community building in a diverse population.

3. Obtener información de factores estructurales y culturales que facilitan la construcción de comunidad en una población diversa.

4. Complement participant-observations.

4. Complementar observación participante.

Population. Mayfair Citizens (sample by residence, ethnic and gender diversity, age); Selected \ SOMOS Mayfair participants; School staff, Non-profit staff, local businesses.

Población. Residentes de Mayfair (muestras por residencia, diversidad étnica y de género, edad); Participantes selectos SOMOS Mayfair; Personal escolar; Personal de

organizaciones no lucrativas, negocios locales.

Place. The interviewee's household, workplace, neighborhood community center or SJSU as appropriate.

Lugar. Hogar del entrevistado, lugar de trabajo, centro comunitario ó SJSU como sea apropiado.

#### Materials Materiales

1. Instrument, pens and notebook  
1. Instrumento, lápices y bloc de notas o cuaderno
2. Recording device and spare batteries;  
2. Dispositivo de grabación y baterías de recambio;
3. watch  
3. Reloj
4. Black and blue marking pens and large paper for network map.  
4. Marcadores negros y azules y papel largo para mapa de red
5. Two copies of the consent form  
5. Dos copias de la forma de consentimiento

#### Research Strategy Estrategia de la investigación

The strategy is to elicit information about the interviewee's personal network in use that can provide a context for understanding the production of leadership development in the Five Wound's area. How does SOMOS Mayfair connect to that production? What is the nature of that connection? From the point of view of stakeholders in the community, has SOMOS Mayfair made a difference? From our point of view, is SOMOS Mayfair being framed by the community as a driver, a catalyst, or an afterthought? What are the systemic relationships revealed by network analysis and stories of SOMOS Mayfair connection?

La estrategia consiste en obtener información sobre el entrevistado de la red personal en uso que puede proporcionar un contexto para la comprensión de la producción de capital social en el área de Mayfair. ¿Cómo SOMOS Mayfair se conecta en la producción? ¿Cuál es la naturaleza de esa conexión? Desde el punto de vista de los residentes de la comunidad, ha hecho SOMOS Mayfair una diferencia? Desde nuestro punto de vista, esta SOMOS Mayfair enmarcado por la comunidad como un conductor, un catalizador o un secundario? ¿Cuáles son las relaciones sistémicas revelada por el



análisis de redes y las historias sobre la conexión de  
SOMOS Mayfair?

## **Background**

### **Fondo**

1. Tell me about your neighborhood? Mayfair?

*Probe: Do you live there? Work there? Have children in schools?*

*Tell me about the people who live there?*

*How long have you been in the (neighborhood, street name)? ?*

1. ¿Cuénteme acerca de su vecindario? Del Mayfair?

Pregunta: ¿Vive usted allí? ¿Trabaja usted allí? ¿Tiene hijos en la escuela?

¿Cuánto tiempo ha estado en el (vecindario, nombre de la calle)?

2. What changes have you seen in the neighborhood?

2. ¿Qué cambios ha visto en el vecindario?

## **Network Elicitation**

### **Elicitación de la Red**

3. (hand the person the black marker) I am going to ask you to think about the people who live in this household. Who are they? Please write their first names and last initial on this sheet [interviewer, annotate with one asterisk next to each name in blue]

3. (Entrégale a la persona el marcador negro) Le voy a preguntar que piensa acerca de las personas que viven en su hogar. ¿Quiénes son? Por favor escriba sus nombres y sus últimas iniciales en el papel [entrevistador, anotar en color azul un asterisco al lado de cada nombre]

4. Who are the people in your family? Please write their first names on this sheet. [interviewer, annotate with two asterisks next to each name in blue]

4. ¿Quiénes son sus familiares? Por favor escriba sus nombres en el papel. [entrevistador, anotar en color azul dos asterisco al lado de cada nombre]

5. Next I am going to ask you to think about yourself, your friends, and the people and organizations that help you connect to your community. Please list the people who help you connect to your community. [give them a few minutes to write in black medium marker [As they provide more information, annotate the map in blue medium marker]

5. Siguiente, le voy a preguntar que piense acerca de su persona, sus amigos, y las personas y organizaciones que le ayudan a conectarse con su comunidad. Por favor liste las personas que le ayudan a conectarse con su comunidad. [dar unos cuantos minutos para que escriba en color negro][A como vaya dando más información, anota en el mapa en color azul].

6. Please list any people you help in the community.

6. Por favor liste algunas personas que le ayuden en la comunidad.

Annotating the Network [interviewer, use blue pen to indicate relationships, activities, places]

Describiendo la Red [entrevistador, usa el marcador azul para indicar las relaciones, actividades, lugares]

7. Who are these people? What is their relationship to you?

7. ¿Quiénes son estas personas? ¿Cuál es su relación con usted?

8. What do they do? (work, abilities, talents) Do they have any special knowledge or skills?

8. ¿Qué hacen? (trabajo, habilidades, talentos) ¿Tienen conocimientos o habilidades especiales?

9. Where are they? Where do you see them?

9. ¿Dónde están? ¿Dónde los ve?

10. What do you do with them? What do you do with them that is connected to the community?

10. ¿Qué hace usted con ellos? ¿Qué hace con ellos que se encuentra conectado a la comunidad?

11. Where do you go to get information about what is happening in the community, for yourself or others?

11. ¿Dónde va para conseguir información acerca de lo que pasa en la comunidad, información para usted o para otros?

12. Are there any organizations that help you connect to your community?

12. ¿Hay organizaciones que le ayudan a usted a conectarse con su comunidad?

13. Tell me about parts of the community you don't feel connected to.

13. Dígame que partes de la comunidad usted no sienta conectada (o)

14. Tell me about any other connections you have to Mayfair?

14. Hábleme acerca de cualquier conexión con Mayfair

15. Please tell me about any projects you have done or anyone you know has done with SOMOS Mayfair? What projects have you done?

Probes: Was this project ongoing? A one-time event?

15. Por favor dígame acerca de los proyectos de SOMOS Mayfair que ha realizado o alguien a quien usted conoce ha participado? ¿Qué proyectos has hecho?

Pregunta: ¿Fue este proyecto en curso? ¿Una sola vez?



**Evaluating SOMOS Mayfair Escuela Siembra**  
**Evaluando a SOMOS Mayfair Escuela Siembra**

16. Why did you decide to do this training?  
Where there other people that helped make that decision? Who?  
Who did you talk to about this?  
Why was that important?
16. ¿Porqué decidió participar en este entrenamiento?  
¿Hubieron otras personas que te ayudaron a hacer esta decisión ¿ Quién?  
¿Con quién platicaste o compartiste sobre esto?  
¿Porqué era importante para tí?
17. What were some of the methods of learning that you liked? Disliked  
Probes: participatory learning?  
Homework assignments?  
17. Cuáles fueron los métodos de aprendizaje que más te gustaron? Cuáles no te gustaron? Dar tu opinión
- Teatro?  
Trabajar en grupos?  
Tarea?
18. What facilitated participation?  
Stipend?  
Hours?  
Day care?  
Food?  
Facilator?  
Other?
18. Que facilitó tu participación?  
Estipendio?  
Horario?  
Cuidado de niños?  
Comida?  
Facilitadora?  
Otro?
19. What were challenges to participating?  
Time?  
Family?  
Work?
- 19 . Cuáles fueron los obstáculos de tu participación?  
Tiempo?  
Familia?  
Trabajo?

20. What did you learn?

Leadership?

Community?

Your self?

20. Que aprendiste?

De liderazgo?

De la comunidad?

De ti misma?

21. In what situations did you consider yourself a leader?

Now? Why?

21. En que situaciones te consideras una líder?

Ahora? Porqué?

22. Looking at the questionnaire, Were there areas that surprised you?

Of your responses before and after?

What didn't make sense?

22. Viendo el cuestionario, que te sorprendió?

De tus respuestas, antes y después?

Qué fue confuso? El lenguaje?

23. How do you imagine your identity being important to communicating to others in this area?

Probes: Can you tell difference bwt men and women lead?

Can you give an example?

23. Cómo te imaginas que tu identidad sea importante para comunicarte con los demás en esta área?

La diferencia entre hombres y mujeres lideres? Puedes darme ejemplos.

24. How do you think this training will effect what you say or do?

your leadership style?

24. Cómo crees que este entrenamiento cambie la manera en que haces las cosas o piensas?

Tu estilo de liderazgo?

25. You have now finished the program: who will you talk to others to get involved

25. Ahora que has terminado el curso, que vas a hacer para involucrar a otros?

26. What have been your best experiences with SOMOS Mayfair Escuela Siembra?

26. ¿Cuáles han sido sus mejores experiencias con SOMOS Mayfair Siembra?

27. Could you tell me of a time when your experience with Escuela Siembra did not go as well as you would have liked?

Probes: What happened?

Why do you think that happened?

*What could have changed?*

27. ¿Podría decirme de un momento en que su experiencia con SOMOS Mayfair no fue así como le hubiera gustado?

Preguntas: ¿Qué pasó?

¿Qué piensa que pasó?

¿Qué podría haber cambiado?

28. In the best possible future, one that could actually happen, what would you like to see happen in your neighborhood?

*Probe: What would be the best role SOMOS Mayfair could have in shaping that future?*

28. En el mejor futuro posible, una realidad que podría suceder, qué le gustaría ver que suceda en su vecindario?

Pregunta: ¿Cuál sería el mejor papel que SOMOS Mayfair podría tener en la configuración de ese futuro?



## Appendix B Escuela Siembra Questionnaire (English)

### SOMOS Mayfair Escuela Siembra Questionnaire 2010

The purpose of the evaluation, this survey is to explore your experience as an ES participant. Your feedback will be in the following areas: Leadership, sense of safety, relational building, agency, optimism and political awareness. Please be as honest, since this will help us to improve the quality of the work to the students and staffs.

Please rate the following questions.

| <u>Leadership</u>  | strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |
|--|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| I courageously stand up for what I believe in  | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I follow through with my commitments.  | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I am empowered and encouraged to solve problems on my own.   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I listen to other before making decisions  | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I am understand how to set goals and priorities to make something happen   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| It is important to support other community leaders   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I am extremely proud to tell people that I am a part of organization   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I understand how my participation in SOMOS Mayfair directly contributes to the overall success of this organization. | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I think it's important to share leadership.  | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I think it's important to listen to people from different backgrounds  | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I am confident in my ability to lead   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I can name 3 strengths of mine   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I am interested in continuing my learning to understand my community   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I see change as an opportunity not a problem   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I am a leader in my family   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I am a leader in my community  | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I believe that leaders should also follow at times   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| A good leader develops leadership in others  | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| It is important for leaders to be role models  | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| When I am in a group I feel comfortable sharing my opinions  | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I arrive on-time and ready to participate  | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| <u>Sense of Safety</u>   | strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |
| I feel safe to explore my various identities   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |

|  |                   |          |         |       |                |
|--|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| I can think of a local space that I feel physical safe to be             | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I can think of a local space that I feel emotionally safe to share       | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I feel shame about my background and life experiences                    | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| <b><u>Relational Building</u></b>  | strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |
| I have a network of people that support me                               | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| When I have a problem, there is someone I can go for support/ guidance   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| It is important to work with a group to get to create change             | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I have strong ties to people from different communities                  | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I see relationships as important to my work                              | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| <b><u>Agency and Optimism</u></b>  | strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |
| I am confident in my actions most of the time                            | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I feel good about who I am   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I feel like others see me in a positive light                            | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I have control over my own decisions                                     | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I believe that I can make a difference                                   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I am proud of my cultural heritage                                       | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I believe that change is possible  | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I have many choices for what I can do with my time                       | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I can make my own decision about my life                                 | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I am reacting to feelings of being overwhelmed and stressed all the time | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| <b><u>Political Awareness</u></b>  | strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |
| I understand the way power is distributed in the society                 | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I understand what it means to have "power with"                          | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I can name situations that demonstrate "power over"                      | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I know how to access power   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I can name a situation that deals with oppression                        | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I can identify inequalities in everyday life                             | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I understand root cause and systems of oppression                        | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I have a clear definition of power                                       | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I understand the factors that contribute to early school success         | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I understand the factors that contribute to family health and wellness   | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I know clear ways that I can get involved with SOMOS                     | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I can identify the obstacles to my child's success I school              | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I can identify obstacles to my family's health and wellness              | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| There is a connection between the environment and health                 | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I can identify causes of the ecological crisis                           | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |
| I can identify solutions to the ecological crisis                        | 1                 | 2        | 3       | 4     | 5              |

### **Short Answer Questions**

1. What do you think it means to be a leader? Give examples if possible.
2. How do you define power? Give examples if possible.
3. How do you define oppression? Give examples if possible.
4. How do you define health? Give examples if possible.

## Appendix C Organization Letter and Flier



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March 10, 2010

Human Subjects Review Board  
San Jose State University

To Whom It May Concern:

SOMOS Mayfair has invited Maribel Martinez and her team of student ethnographers to conduct a qualitative evaluation of our pilot *Escuela Siembra* leadership training to increase the skills, analysis and civic participation of our community members. I have read their project's proposal and grant our organization's approval.

Please contact me at (408) 240-4999 or [ashell@somosmayfair.org](mailto:ashell@somosmayfair.org) with any questions.

Sincerely,

Aryeh Shell  
Program Director, Community Engagement  
SOMOS Mayfair

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# ESCUELA SIEMBRA

*¡Aprender para luchar y luchar para aprender!*

- Sábados 10 y 17 de Abril de 9:00am a 3:00pm
- Lunes 26 de Abril y 3 de Mayo de 9:00am a 12:00pm
- Sábado 15 de Mayo de 9:00am a 3:00pm
- Lunes 24 de Mayo de 9:00am a 12:00pm

**Curso  
101**

La Escuela Siembra es el nuevo Instituto de Liderazgo de Somos Mayfair

- ¿Interesado en la salud y el bienestar de tu familia?
- ¿Quieres ayudar al éxito escolar de tus niños?
- ¿Quieres hacer una diferencia en tu comunidad pero no sabes como participar?

*¡Participa en este entrenamiento piloto para desarrollar más tus cualidades como líder de tu familia y de tu comunidad!*

CUPO LIMITADO A 15 PERSONAS. Será un estipendio de \$50 para los que asisten todas las sesiones. Habrá cuidado de niños y bocadillos.

Más información: 408.240.4999



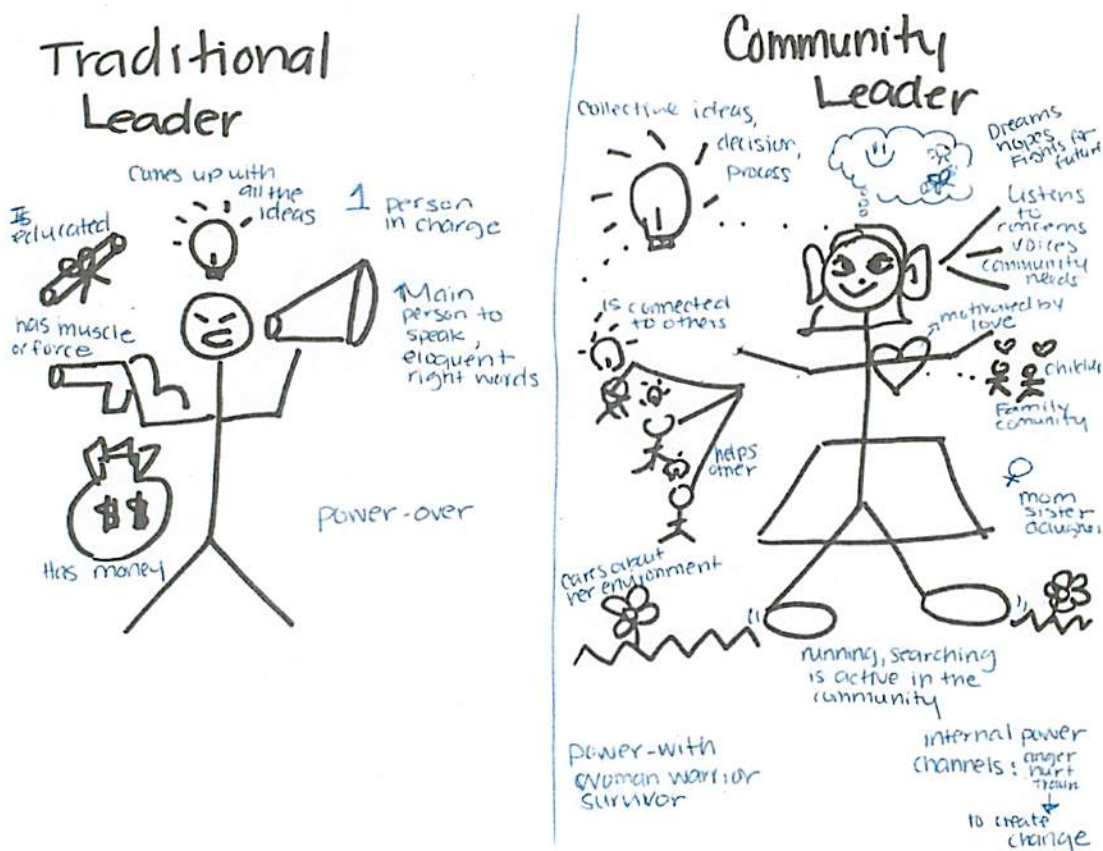
## Appendix D Alternate Activities

### Activity #1 Traditional Vs. Community Leader

This is a pictorial activity that shows distinctions between a traditional leader and a community leader. The drawing is created with the input of participants. They are asked to name some traditional (positional) leaders and community (relational and systems) leaders. The end product looks similar to this picture below.

### Activity #2 Creating a Community Network

The group is asked to gather in a large circle. Each is asked to put one hand in the



center and another up in the air. The facilitator will hold a ball of course yarn. The facilitator will begin to create a web among the participants with responses to the following question: What are barriers to creating a strong community? After a couple of responses, the facilitator brings out a large sticky ball (A medium size ball with tape around it). The ball represents the issues in the community. As the ball touches the web, the issue falls through to the ground. The facilitator explains that without a strong community, issues fall through the cracks and do not get resolved. Building on the existing web, the facilitator asks for responses on how the community can become

stronger. After several responses, the ball is dropped again and if done correctly, the “issue” will be captured by the web.

#### Activity #3 What’s in your diet?

The purpose of this activity is to see the levels of fat and sugar in every day foods. Images or actual items such as soda, chocolate milk, chips, burgers and fries are shown with the actual sugar and fat levels for the individual item. Facilitators can also use figures of average yearly intake of individuals in the US.

#### Activity #4 The true cost of products

This activity will unpack the cost of “low-cost” items at the store. Comparing the cost of foreign mass produced goods and local item will show the hidden cost in labor and the negative impact on the community and environment. In this session, the group can also have a conversation about the challenges to being a conscious consumer while adhering to a strict budget.

#### Activity #5 What is Analysis?

Often leaders are asked to analyze their neighborhood but not often given tools to complete the analysis. There are multiple tools that can be used to explain analysis. Popular methods include ORID and What? So What? Now, What? This simply makes steps for analysis explicit. Both models begin with describing a situation and stating the facts. Then they move participants toward a more interpretive stage to discern meaning and emotions. Lastly, the models guide participants toward making big picture assertion or potential action steps.

#### Activity #6 The Story of Stuff

(<http://www.storyofstuff.org/>)

The Story of Stuff is a web-based video portal that animates the story of stuff. It answers basic questions like: how does stuff get to my house? Where does it go? The website has expanded to include the story of plastic bags, story of broke, story of cosmetics, and many others. It exposes the crisis of our capitalistic system and how it is on the brink of disaster. It exposes the involvement of governments, corporations, and local consumers. Unfortunately, this site is only supported in English. However, facilitators might turn off the sound and create a simple translation to accompany the videos.

#### Activity #7 Life maps

Supplies:

11x17 sheets of paper

Post-its

Magazines

Glue

Tape

Markers

Color pencils

**Objective:** To reflect on the significant moment in life (personal or professional) that have contributed to this particular point in time/ development of leadership.

Participants are to use any medium necessary to visually represent this life journey. They may use magazine clippings, words, drawings or any means of expression to share as little or as much as they would like about their life up to this point. Encourage participants to showcase at least 5 event or times that have made a deep impact. Plan for 30-60 minutes for participants to put their life maps together for sharing. Plan about 10-20 min per person sharing. Ask participants to dig deep but share only what they feel comfortable sharing. This is an opportunity to remind participant of earlier agreements of confidentiality.

**Activity #8 Take a stand**

**Supplies:**

List of life questions

Enough space to take 20 steps forward and 20 steps back

**Objective:** To explore the advantages and challenges encountered as well as noting how far individuals' journeys have taken them.

1. Have participants line up in a horizontal line across the middle of the space
2. Ask them to link arms, and stay links as much as possible without straining themselves
3. Go through the life questions list asking participants to either take a step forward according to the question set (this should be list of questions that pulls information from perceived challenges and advantages to success)

Plan about 30 to debrief the activity. Questions to explore are:

1. What surprised you?
2. How did it feel to be in the front? Back? Middle?
3. What was it like to step forward? Back?
4. How does this relate to what we are doing?

**Optional:** have the group get back in a line and ask them to pose the questions of how they will success together and taking steps forward together.

**Activity #9 Corners of the Room**

**Supplies:**

Tape

8 1/2 x 11 sheets with different labels (gender, race, class, sexual orientation, ability, mixed, etc)

Question sheet

Large room to move around



**Objective:** To explore what facets of participant identity are most prominent or least prominent when making decisions or confronted in situations.

1. The group gathers at the center of the room
2. Facilitator reads off questions list
3. Participants go the identity that is most used for prominent in that scenario
4. De brief: perceptions/assumptions

**Activity #10 Mujeres Fuertes**

*"Tienes que aceptar que como mujer, eres fuerte* (You have to accept that as a woman you are strong)," Jiscela stated in reflecting on her learning about leadership. Since some women might feel apprehensive calling themselves leaders, "Mujeres Fuertes" examples reinforce the value and strength of women while not imposing the title. Examples of strong women can raise the self-esteem and present real life examples of women, stay-at-home mothers and single parents, who have made a difference in the community and the world. I have also included examples of women who were raised in similar low-income conditions and icons from Meso-American culture.

## Blanca Alvarado (1931- )

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Como una madre soltera de cinco hijos, se levantó de la asistencia pública a los cargos públicos. Fue cónsul de la ciudad de San Jose Distrito 4, Vice Alcalde de la Ciudad, Supervisora del Condado de Santa Clara; La primera Latina en estos puestos. Y después de 28 años de servicio público se retiró pero sigue activa en la comunidad.

## Las Soldaderas 1910-

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Las soldaderas eran mujeres que hicieron contribuciones significativas a los ejércitos federales y los rebeldes de la Revolución Mexicana. Ellas compraban y preparaban comida. También sirvieron de enfermeras, mensajeras, y jugaron otros papeles, incluso luchar con armas. Miles murieron y miles sobrevivieron. Ana Maria Zapata, hija de Emiliano, organizó la Unión de Mujeres Revolucionarias en 1935 y así ganaron pensiones para ellas.

## Rosa Gumataotao Rios

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Rosa Rios es la 43ra y la actual Tesorera de los Estados Unidos. Ella es la sexta latina en ocupar el cargo, así como la tercera de California por vez consecutiva.

Ríos es primera generación Mexicano-Americana. Sus padres se divorciaron en 1974 y ella y sus ocho hermanos fueron criados en Hayward, California solamente por su madre.

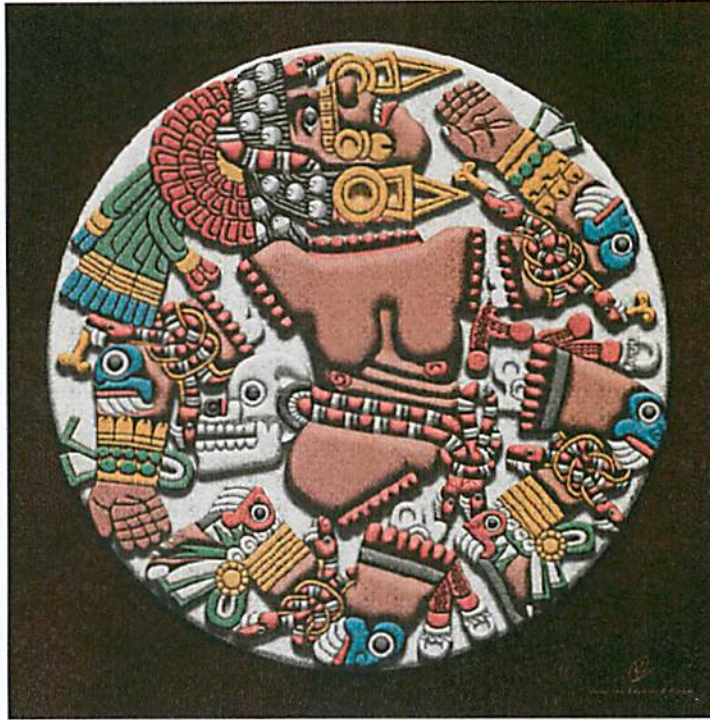
Ríos asistió a la Universidad de Harvard y después de graduarse de la universidad vivió en Fremont, Castro Valley y Oakland. Es casada y tiene dos hijos.

Todo billete Americano impreso desde el 2009 tiene su firma. Ella es parte de al gabinete de gobierno del Presidente Barack Obama.



# Coyolxauhqui

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En la mitología azteca, la Coyolxauhqui, "la cara pintada con las campanas" era una hija de Coatlicue y Mixcóatl, líderes de Huitznahuas Centzon y dioses de las estrellas. Coyolxauhqui era una maga poderosa.

Coyolxauhqui es la diosa en la luna. Otros estudiosos consideran que debe ser entendida como la Diosa de la Vía Láctea, o se asocia con patrones de estrellas relacionados con Huitzilopochtli.

## Dolores Huerta (1930- )

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Dolores Huerta es mejor conocida por co-fundar la Unión de Campesinos UFW (United Farmworkers Union) en 1962 con César Chávez. Abogó mucho tiempo para que los trabajadores del campo con meta de que tengan buen trabajo y una de vida mejor. Hizo todo esto siendo mamá soltera con once hijos.



# Itzpapalotl

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Itzpapalotl es la mariposa de obsidiana o de garras, la mujer guerrera.

Itzpapalotl es a menudo representada como un ser esquelético con garras de jaguar las alas bordeadas por cuchillos de obsidiana.

Ella es uno de los tzitzimime, los espíritus de estrellas poderosas y peligrosas.

Con otras deidades femeninas como Cihuateteo, Tlatecuhtli, Coatlicue, Citlalicue, y Cihuacoatl las tzitzimime son protectoras de las parteras y las mujeres en trabajo de parto.

Itzpapalotl lucha por defender y proteger lo suyo.

# Juana Gutierrez Y

## Las Madres de East Los Angeles

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Juana nació en 1932 en México, donde vivió hasta los 20 años. En 1954, se casó con Ricardo Gutiérrez y dos años más tarde la joven pareja se mudó a Los Ángeles, donde sus nueve hijos nacieron.

Gutiérrez era una madre y ama de casa que trabajó para hacer su comunidad más segura mediante su participación en una red de padres que comenzaron a vigilar la vecindad y abogar por programas para jóvenes.

Luego, en 1984, cuando se enteró que el estado iba a construir una prisión cerca de su casa, ella comenzó a trabajar con vecinos, pidiéndoles que se unieran a ella para derrotar esta propuesta. Fue el comienzo de su activismo político y la formación de Madres de Este de Los Ángeles (MELASI).

MELASI obtuvo su nombre debido a que las madres en el hogar eran las únicas disponibles para ser la voz de los residentes del este de Los Ángeles. Ganaron su campaña y lograron pasar una ley que declara que el estado nunca puede construir una prisión en esa área.

Antes de MELASI, se les hacía fácil a las empresas hacer decisiones sin tomar en cuenta a la comunidad del Eastside. Esta organización de madres sigue defendiendo a la comunidad contra la violencia y daños al medio ambiente.



## Sylvia Mendez (1936- )

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A los ocho años, ella jugó un papel instrumental en el caso Méndez contra Westminster, el caso de la segregación histórica de 1946. El caso puso el fin a la segregación en California, y allanado el camino para la integración y el movimiento de derechos civiles.

Méndez fue enfermera y se retiró después de trabajar durante treinta años en su campo. Ella adoptó a dos niñas y vive en Fullerton, California. Ella viaja y da conferencias para educar a otros sobre las contribuciones históricas hechas por sus padres y los compañeros de los demandantes a los esfuerzos de lucha contra la segregación en los Estados Unidos. El éxito del caso Méndez contra Westminster hizo que California fuera el primer estado de la nación para poner fin a la segregación en la escuela, allanando el camino para una mejor conocido Brown vs Board of Education siete años más tarde, lo que pondría fin a la segregación escolar en todo el país.

## Tonantzin/ Virgen de Guadalupe

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En la mitología azteca y entre los actuales nahuas, Tonantzin "Nuestra Madre venerada" es un título general otorgado a deidades femeninas. El título es particularmente cree que se refieren a la Madre Tierra, y, entre los católicos, hoy en día representa a la Virgen María.