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**Girls for Gender Equity:  
Strategies for Engaging Girls of Color to End Social Inequities**

**Joanne Smith**

**October 17, 2018**

Please stand by for real-time captions.

>> Hello and thank you for joining us.

>> Hello. On behalf of praxis I welcome all of you to the keynote address. The address occupies a special place in ALCs curriculum, in the past we have learned from academics, activists, and organizers who were working to bring about social change.

>> Today we are lucky to learn from an activist and organizer who is founded and continues to lead an organization that brings together young voices for change. These voices have been ignored and overlooked, we have Joanne Smith with us. She is the founder and president of girls for gender -- equity, it's an organization built on intergenerational commitment to the listed development of girls and women. GGE is committed to removing barriers and creating opportunities for girls and women, it's an organization that builds intergenerational movement with girls and young women of color.

>> Utilization is founded on untapped leadership potential of this community. I want to talk about the purpose of the keynote address.

>> This is designed to inspire our thinking and provide us with information about social change work that is going on all around us. It allows us to stretch our imagination exercise our analytical muscles, and shorten our advocacy skills,

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keynote addresses motivate us to take a critical look at the way we work and how we advocate, build coalitions and encourage leadership and shape our work.

>> What we learn here challenges us to do better. I would love to introduce Joanne but before I do so, can you come in and talk about how we negotiate the technology for today's program.

>> Thank you. Hello. It is good to be with you. To touch upon a couple of things, relative to the webinar platform, the phone lines will be on Mute, so we encourage you to utilize the Q&A box to freely typing questions or comments that you might have our presenter. We would love to hear you share your thoughts with her, I will pass any comments you have along to Joanne and she will respond within the audio presentation.

>> If you're experiencing any technology difficulties today whether it is through your Internet audio component or through the webinar platform, utilize your opportunity to connect with Patricia our webinar host, through the Q&A box.

>> You can check in with us about problems you may be having, or you can filing by telephone. If you do that which you make that connection by phone, turn your computer speakers off.

>> The session is being recorded and so feel free to revisit this and share this with any of your ALC colleagues who may not be participating today. It will be posted on the ALC website after the session is complete.

>> With that, I am eager to have this presentation get started.

>> Have -- we have join with us today and she is the founder and director and CEO of GGE, gender for -- girls for gender equity, she has received many awards and

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recognitions and accolades for her work including the prestigious women of vision that she received from this foundation this year. Congratulations JoAnn.

>> She went to Columbia Institute for nonprofit management. I know her book, was published in 2011. We are in for a wonderful treat. Thank you, Joanne.

>> Thank you. Hello everyone and thank you for having me. Again my name is Joanne Smith I am the founder for girls for gender equity, I came to this work at 25 years old, through a fellowship. I encourage folks as you're embarking on life and you look at strategies for social change look into fellowship, girls for gender equity is an organization, it's committed to the physical and social and economic development of girls and women, as we focus on girls and women we focus on nonconforming young people within that narrative. We embark on multiple ways and strategies to reach gender and racial equity with ultimately that will be the goal.

>> GGE was founded in 2001, in 2002 it became a formal nonprofit, we became a formal nonprofit because very early on in 2001, when we started, we grew tremendously from starting with about 12 young girls ages seven through 12 through 80 within two months and I was the one who is leading the Fellowship and having 12 women from the community volunteering and taking up my position and I have to do the admin work and realizing there's a need for this.

>> Because a young girl at eight years old in the community on her way to school in the morning was raped by a man on the top of a rooftop building, to realize that's one of our young people, and the eight-year-old wall from Ground Zero where she was raped to school and fell in the arms of her principal at eight years old with -- invisible to the community around her, it was a moment of reckoning as an organization that we are going to recognize gender and racial equity and we

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will work at the root of eradicating racial oppression that we need to do so with a commitment that was lifelong and with as much strategy of black girls and girls the call and margin of communities, because the incident was just indicative of how within every system black girls are often invisible. And how within partnerships relations as well as systemic relations black girls then are the most vulnerable.

>> It is with that intention in 2002 we became an organization. Within the organization we set across our course values, of eradicating general violence but with core principles of intersectional lands maintaining a feminist and women's perspective of renter -- recognizing heterosexual privilege, and understanding that while we were working to organize communities and to ship systems that so many of us came to the work because we are the work these are systems that were actively living in, and at times rely on for our survival so we would have a direct practice as well as in advocacy and organizing strategy.

>> Knowing that girls for gender equity works intentionally even now, to center black girls while we are working with boards of color, gender nonconforming young people, women and adults and government systems and we say we can do that while saying and we know the measure of success will be how our world and communities treat black girls.

>> With that in mind, girls for gender equity works to build the leadership and advocacy skills of young people, so young people are not just their story, one incidence or the margin -- the marginalization but there also the experts who have advocacy strategies that should be a part of the solution that we are then looking for. And part of the resource allocation that we are naming, part of the legislative policy that we are looking on, as I go through this presentation of how we do our work, so many of you are doing amazing work and in this time, it is

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important we sure as many possible strategies, we are at a time were so much of the power needs to be decentralized, and we need to be creative in working together different, collaborating differently, and not maintaining these paradigms of having just a platform or having just a structure of a nonprofit, but having shared ideologies and strategies and being able to do that at a drop of a dime and being able to learn from each other.

>> My hope is to share as many strategies as possible with you that may speak to your issue area and something you are working on and what to do and hopefully spark ideas that you want to share.

>> As I go through this is common terms will come up, cisgender, a person whose sense of personal identity and gender correspondence with the sex assigned at birth is also cis, that means your gender assigned at birth is what you identify as and how you walk through the world.

>> Transgender is a person whose sense of personal identity and gender is different than the sex assigned at birth, also Trans, at times TGNC altogether but gender nonconforming which would be the GNC is gender identity that does not match masculine and feminine gender norms, like Trans, cis, has nothing to do with their sexual preference, we are talking gender identity. And non-binary, so not identifying with either the binaries. You're not identifying as anything; your gender is fluid. You may even identify as gender nonconforming. These are terms that will come up and as far as gender because for girls for gender equity, I want to be sure to name is because you talk about girls and women I will not always say, Trans or non-binary but these are my people these are the young people we are working with.

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>> Girls for gender equity does this work through core programs that advocacy strategies, I'll talk about each program individually to share the most poignant parts of the program understand that although we have best practices of how it is we work, I am somebody who is committed to the outcome, and the impact that we have. While I think that programming is fantastic I see this as a strategy. We can have 10 additional programs and it doesn't get us any closer to liberation if we do not have impact.

>> When I share these programs, I would love to hear of the programs or strategies that other folks will share. This is how we work.

>> We started with our sisters and strength program in 2004, and this is a one-year program that centers young girls in high school to not only be advocates and to learn advocacy and organizing skills but also to be young people receive a stipend and support for that and young people who get to be at the youth development stage.

>> They get one on one counseling with support with our social work staff, they also get support around college access and the things we know college students need.

>> I will go further into sisters and strength but before that I will give you a sense of urban leaders Academy, was the second program, it is a middle school and high school program that is based in Brooklyn, the program is five days a week, it started in 2005, and the premise has been to have a holistic program to meet the development needs of young people especially in active school environments to develop their leadership skills so they see themselves as leaders in the moment and leaders of a lifetime who carries social justice values.

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>> With urban leaders Academy we get a lot of places to experiment from tech, photography, creativity, so urban leaders as a program is more rooted in the school and we work closely with the school around restorative justice, building a culture of holistically developing a young student.

>> Sisters and strength is a program that happened at girls for gender equity. I will come back to the young women's initiative and movement of urban policies and dive deeper into sisters and strength, this is the cornerstone program, over the years sisters and strength has been the program where the young people are the voice of the social change issues that they were experiencing, and they were backing the policies.

>> From sexual harassment, to school push out, to community safety, sisters in strength has been that voice. This year for the first time because our former senior director founded the #MeToo movement and over the last year blew up what we knew could be true around gender-based violence, sisters and strength has become a place where young people are able to come to heal and we are starting our non--- our inaugural series as part of sisters in strength.

>> That came as a result of needing to pivot around, directly responding to what it is young people are experiencing as we are as a nation, addressing and working to interrupt sexual violence and gender-based violence as we are grappling with consent, grappling with identity, and grappling with our government and the decisions that do not protect us that we need a space for young people to really build on your skills and the articulation of what is happening to them, but also the allies together so we can strategically work to interrupt those policies and practices that are not serving them.

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>> This is such a wonderful program you're leading, we are talking about teams, young girls, even if you are providing them incentives, financial incentives, they can come in but how do you make sure they have long-term engagement? How do you make sure they stay?

>> In the current political situation, how is that affecting this work in GGE?

>> Of making sure they have long-term engagement, sisters and strength is a two-year program, often times because it has been around since 2004, young people by word-of-mouth know what is coming and they apply we have a lot of applicants. We interview them, so we know young people, we -- there has to be an intentionality around wanting to be part of sisters and strength, we are all working on the analysis, it is evolving, it's more about what is your intent and what you want from this. Often times it becomes a relationship, young people we had a reunion and there are cohorts that are nine years removed, that's when he graduated from sisters and strength and they feel GGE is their community. Although -- they are now mothers and they have moved away, GGE is their place because it formed their consciousness and supported them during the development stage.

>> I often call our program a little bit of a leaky pipeline, we have a gap of ninth grade and while the middle school programs serve six through eighth grade, sisters in strength is 10 through 12th grade and because of the issue areas that we cover, there's a gap between ninth grade and 12th graders, we decided to do 10 to 12 so we can move at the speed that met in the middle.

>> But ninth grade is a year that young people especially girls, need a lot of support so will we look to do, we promote other programs that can support them with an active school environment, so sisters and strength is about the



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organization, they have to travel breast the after-school environment they have programming so urban leaders Academy accepts ninth graders, so they stay.

>> There are multiple ways that many people engaged, just this year there's another cohort that we hire back, and we hire them to do special projects or higher than and that has been the model would be to understand that we can hire them if we have the leadership support because experience does not naturally translate into have any expertise.

>> We are committed to the development, so they are set up for success. There are multiple ways that young people work with us and come back and there's a college fair, multiple events, speaking events.

>> With the question about how has the political climate affected GGE, that's loaded. Because we have been starting as an organization, looking to address gender-based violence on multiple levels, preventing abuse, education, we were ready for a moment like this and even better, we had the senior director whose vision it was to develop #MeToo and so in collaboration with #MeToo and has been a partnership, we are developing and have developed the inaugural survivor circle that will skill nationally and in people have been able to articulate consent understand -- and understand but it's also that piece with a regular culture of young people, the media, young people are disconnected from the climate of #MeToo that we might be connected to as adults. They do not see themselves in that narrative, so it is helpful -- if you do not have the access or cannot attend something she speaks at, I can see the disconnect happening with other people.

>> For us it is a little bit of the because of proximity, we have access but at the same time if we speak about the culture of young people, there is a lot of work to

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be done. Especially nonconforming young people, to be lifted up within the culture of addressing sexual violence.

>> I encourage the listeners to write in your questions in the chat box. Feel free to write in any questions you have.

>> Other aspects of sisters and strength is developing sisterhood and often times we have sisterhood and sibling hood, with the understanding that that kind of connection, and loyalty and thinking about the next person among Girl Scout has to be nurtured. It's not just given, it happens but once that it is nurtured their unbreakable bonds that are created so we set an intention and this came from the young people so one of the things we do every year is have evaluations, how is it going we sold a trend that although initially we did not say sisterhood is the aspect of this program, they said this is what I got out of it.

>> I no longer -- I'm not going to talk to her, and it went to that's what people say about us and it has those fee devices and I'm going to give her a chance.

>> I don't have any girlfriends, I like hanging out with boys these are triple things that come up that is feedback around how their viewing themselves and other girls their age. Because of the experiences they have together, hearing each other, understanding we are in this together, so the attitudes were not about me at all.

>> That was about what she is going through, and I can have empathy for my sister.

>> I will go back some of the work that we do to develop that is Eagle mapping and getting a sense and understanding mapping the resources that are available from interpersonal resources to commit the resources that are available.

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>> Within that first mapping session so many young people get to share their family and what is or is not in their community and they get to learn so much about each other and see where they overlap. And intentionally they see themselves as a resource to each other.

>> Another aspect of the way we work as an organization framework is by using process inventory action research, and this is research that is done for the community by the community, research that says we are the experts of our experiences, we understand the problems and what needs to change and we have to investigate and take on measures to figure out what the problems are, what is the major issue, how will we research that, how will that proceed?

>> And what are the results, what do they mean? This is a process that is continuous, it's a process that starts with identifying the problem, research, bringing what you find to the community to say what does that mean, one other area that research shapes is the area around sexual harassment and how girls are impacted by sexual harassment at school.

>> Through the research, they identify the sexual harassment they were experiencing on the streets in the community, they identified that by naming safe space, we talk about that, they are experiencing the sexual harassment, that makes them feel unsafe, what they do to avoid that, how they respond, and how that diminishes their self-esteem and sense of safety, we spent so much time in school, how does this happen?

>> For them, in school it is safe because it is a school and there was normalcy, but that is just the culture in school, until I realize that they kept talking about it, they needed to understand how it impacts their ability to learn, ability to show up in school and feel confident. They ended up sharing stories about sexual assault that

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before but it is worry action research for it was a rite of passage, so through the work we could connect the dots around workplace sexual violence and the Anita Hill story, at the history of work we have can connect the dots and we can publish the research and develop a documentary of their experiences and be in a documentary for Anita Hill in 2014, sharing her story. We had her be a voice of inspiration of how things can change when you speak your truth to power.

>> Because of the Tory action research had led us down the path of creating solutions. We had solutions coming from the community.

>> One other area, this is the current state Is understanding school push out We do not right away, while the world was talking about [ Indiscernible] we did not make the connection of what is happening to our girls with push-up, it was the connection of sexual violence around what happens around gender, but this area was unlocked from voice of color for a long time. Around 2011 we started to ask the questions from our young people around, their time in school, it came up that often times they were punished because of zero-tolerance policies in school for reactants and sexual harassment, if a boy pulled her bra strap and they hit him, both of them were getting in trouble, it was seen as a fight or seen as insubordination as opposed to being a thing as what should be called which was sexual harassment and defending yourself against that.

>> We started to see patterns, we started to look into what other ways and factors impact girls of color going to school, what interrupts their ability to get an education.

>> Through the research we can do research around the school that girls deserve, the building up to that, be able to name all these factors that you see from

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pregnancy and parenting to systems, the foster care system, to transfer be a, homophobia, factors interrupt young people's ability to go to school, and he

>> Is often times are rooted in sexism and gender-based violence.

>> That work let our young people into the and 16, nothing just happened, especially if it is deeply rooted in the community, oftentimes the work you're doing is twofold, you are doing work to unveil an issue and to have further understanding about it and is a cultural shift and education that is happening, as you learn more from each other.

>> Oftentimes the education as a research intersex, and it is reflective of marginalized communities, the education and consciousness is in conflict with the normal everyday culture and what it is you are used to. There is the internal learning that communities are doing, and an outward facing learning that communities are doing as you do the research while you're figuring things out. So, over the years, the research has led us to schools girls deserve and this calls upon education and governments to create schools that center justice for young people so they can foster a supportive school environment.

>> Through that work girls for gender can work with students who identify as to what that environment would mean, it could be something as simple as a warm meal, can we have a warm lunch, can we have a place to convene and express ourselves, for others, can my body not be policed, can my gender expression and what I wear not be a reason that I get sent to the principal, cannot be disciplined because of the dress code violation, that is imposed because of standards that do not fit my culture and what I'm reflecting in my dress. We are not talking about young people dressed in gang apparel, or seen apparel, we are talking about

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people whose uniforms do not fit them at the length that they are told they should fit.

>> Oftentimes those are black girls, so schoolgirls are working nationally to address these issues, to enhance title IX of the education amendment, and doing so on the local and national level with different organizations as well as the young people who were a part of the research focus groups and analysis.

>> There is a parallel in domestic violence world that we work in with adults, there's a lot of legal involvement and law-enforcement involvement and women who use force against their partners reactively. When you talk about young girls reacting to sexual harassment, they reminded me of somewhat of that.

>> The zero-tolerance policy comes down hard on them. That is interesting.

>> Can you speak a little bit about the research in the community?

>> With the research for sexual harassment, with the sisters in strength: work, we worked with a doctoral candidate who came from the public science project, and the young people let so much of this but what is the research to come up with as a group, the question they want to ask. What is the problem? How are girls affected by sexual harassment in school? Then the girls together, we had a retreat, the girls could land on -- why this was important then they could land on their multiple ways for us to research this, what are the research tools?

>> For those three days we explored research tools, developed service and figured out what is it we want to use and how do we want to get these questions answered, then we can land on the tools and they started to develop the tools. One of the main tools was the sexual harassment survey, this was disseminated to 1200 students throughout New York City.

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>> With the survey, if you know schools and colleges, you have to pass an IRB board, they have to approve surveys and research, but they do not have to approve what student to student surveys are so the girls did a contest, maybe it was iPads, something that they would win for a price, and these were the prizes for who got the most surveys completed.

>> You would see the most creative ways that students will get teachers to allow them to do surveys in school, one of the ways was I am going to the bathroom now. And they allow the students to disseminate the surveys in school, while standing outside the door.

>> I will work on this and were quietly but when it is time for me to turn back around, I need all papers away. So, working with students, the organizers, the surveys were completed so their voices could be heard.

>> They did slam books, they were open-ended questions that was passed around the school with open-ended questions, they would answer what they thought. That's where we could get qualitative data. An understanding of the thinking of how high school students think.

>> Once the surveys were put into SPS and analyzed, then we had another retreat and they came together to say to think through what that meant. What does it mean for boys, the number one place they are sexually harassed is the locker room. What does that mean?

>> Does that mean power? How does that show what? What does that mean for the school? It is this way that they thought about each and every question, what does it mean that girls are sexually harassed in the most public of places, what does that mean about the culture?

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>> The findings were that girls that were sexual harassment always and stairwells the most, that's Wednesday -- that's when students were transitioning from class.

>> They took the findings and called in the community and about 100 people, community members, they facilitated the process, the community -- these are the folks who do the work, they came from school, they got the breakdown of the questions and that was based on where the girls were. Are we right or wrong? And that they based on the work, the committee said we want to continue the work and develop a coalition.

>> It was a naturally evolving process and with the research, as you have this process and analysis, the coalition action, what will we do about that, as you do the action, and give it time to have impact, to reflect and you evaluate and you go back and identify, what is coming next and what does that mean?

>> That's why the action, it is community involvement and it is years of work to change and shift the culture.

>> I will touch on this quickly, this was a place where because of what was the learning, about school push out and how it impacts bias, schools were around girls attitudes, and the assumption that they are mad and loud Because New York City public schools there are so many schools, 1.2 1.2 million students, so New York City schools were overcrowded and schools that are based in black communities often the schools that are most policed so New York City we know out of the nation, New York City has the fifth largest police district in the nation in the public schools.

>> Going to school, it was though every day they were getting scan as if they were going into the airport. With the assumption they are criminals, something would



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be found, things like their hair being told take out all of your pins because your hairpins are making the alarm go off.

>> This to people -- this is when you first get to school. These are conditions and many schools, that speaks to the school to prison pipeline and how you break down students of color and their sense of self and urgency by being born into the restrictive policing practices. It prepares them.

>> It prepares them so as we were tackling these issues, the question was asked, we know the problem, what would happen, how do we build utopia that serves you? What does that look like?

>> Those questions through focus groups were asked to 120 students, who are currently in a public school, to answer what is the school that girls deserve so you can learn a lot more you can learn about them we publications, on the website I can put the link in and you can read our reports and our findings.

>> Similar to the work we do around sexual harassment, we put the findings back to the people, to the community, before writing the report. Even now, around title IX, and the climate around education equity, we are policies and practices that girls deserve to counter that.

>> It is not rigid, it's more of like what is it in Nevada, what is it for you, how can you gauge your schools.

>> Oftentimes it will boil down to civil and human rights of being treated with decency, so you can thrive and receive your education.

>> Urban leaders Academy, that is the middle school, program, we work with boys and girls, it is based in Brooklyn, they develop leadership skills, social justice principles, they really get to experiment a lot with farming, multiple areas from

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food justice, service learning, some of the campaign work that urban leaders does because often times these are the students who want to be part of public speaking efforts and want to be able to lend their voice, they embark on letter writing campaigns and can contribute to the dialogue, often times those meetings at city Council are in the middle of the day and they are at school, their input is added and it's a place where boys see a role, there have been years when we would have more boys registered for the program compared to girls, they understood that was the place where they could develop into young men whose work was to fight for gender equity and can see themselves having a role. So urban leaders Academy is one of the core programs.

>> The next program, is the young women initiative, the young women's Council, it is an integral part to the young women's initiative, the Council as a group is a group of young people who live in all five boroughs in New York who play a role in implementation, it's a governance process, these people name what legislation and policies, what resources, what practices and programs, research, is needed to support their development.

>> Through collaborative efforts, specific programs where they gain experience and develop as leaders, in media, through social justice, it grew out of our strategizing, to have the government name and see that young women of color were equally as important as men and boys of color, but also were equally needed to name and lift up their needs because it was urgent.

>> It grew out of 2000 2014 strategies of addressing how the Obama White House was talking about men and boys of color. What we were able to do, to get the young women's initiative to be a strategy in New York City and in nine other places, we could partner with the city speaker Melissa Mark-Vivirito row and

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share through the town hall hearing how it is young people are disenfranchised, and a shared strategy around how we can rectify that.

>> Through that strategy came six months of working groups with over 300 stakeholders, within those groups, were young people and that is where the young women's advisory Council came from. It was design so young people were the last word in the strategy. They would hear the recommendations and hear from the experts who were older than them, and yet they were the experts because this was their living experience.

>> We could do all of this work in 2015 in the speaker's city Council in New York City. There were 60 staff members and we brought in 200 community members, a steering committee and a young women's Council to lead this process. We were at the forefront of this design, one of the wonderful things that came out of this, over 80 recommendations that we landed on, one of the ways that we could leverage power, this is a strategy you can use in your community, is to about democracy so as young people and at the group, as the group is sifting through what the recommendations are for the working group, young people get three parts and get to name three recommendations more than the average group member.

>> That way it helps to leverage the playing field, it adds more power to their votes, so it is the ability to vote, and adding more equitable process so they are heard and so that was the democracy and the way of which young people got to vote and be heard within the young women's initiative process. The young women's initiative has a report, it is the recommendation as well as we did a report called building power, it shared with the first year of this process consisted of for our young people. So, one of the things we learned in that process was while it was focused on nonconforming young people it was hard for transit

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people to feel comfortable coming to a city government office and trust that the identity on their idea not matches the name they want to be called or the gender expression they show up in, would not land them dealing with the state.

>> They would be heard or if they had a criminal offense, it would not be a trap because they have to go through security and for some they might need to have protection on them because they live in a bad neighborhood and they know they are targeted on the street.

>> Presented as a clear barrier for some that Them away so that meant we had to design and partner with organizations, they could be somewhere else, and we could set up a same condition, process, everything that the city Council is resourcing us with to make sure their voices were heard.

>> It did not mean we did not set up groups for young women within the process, it meant here is another way for us to have additional voices be heard. We are providing a safer space.

>> That is one of the adjustments we were able to make. In 2016, philanthropy, and recognizing the initiative as a powerful strategy and I don't know if anybody here was on at that time, part of the Obama White House and attended those sessions, in that space, philanthropy, the women's funding the work named the young women's initiative as a national strategy. They wanted other women to lift up and part of that call to action came from the funder New York women's foundation, that lifted up the young women's initiative.

>> We want to go meet with the speaker's office, we brought with us a local investor and a national investor to show there is interest in philanthropy resourcing solutions so showing that interest we showed city Council, you have to

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be able to match that, that has to be a budget item. The recommendations have to land on the budget of the discretionary funds that you will resource.

>> We did not know how much that was, it set the intention that collectively where movement building.

>> It is with the intention that the city earmarked \$10 million of commitment and another 10 million and another 10 million so \$30 million has been earmarked for the young women's initiative. Philanthropy called as a national strategy, connected with nine other cities and states throughout the nation, there was one in Dallas, New York, California, greater Birmingham, Washington, greater Memphis, Minnesota, Western Massachusetts, they led the national collaborative a young women's initiative.

>> For any folks who are at the United States initiative this year you saw what happens when young people are activated and see themselves as agents of change locally, they can affect the impact of change and was voices matter -- and whose voices matter.

>> One of the strategy, some of this will reconnect to someone that I've mentioned, is the ability to movement built, to engage in organizing and to lift the policies so we do this collectively with all of our young people through the programs, as well as our staff and community, we work towards institutional change, while he might have some of us might have an individual need for development, the issue is lying in our system.

>> We organize collectively with other organizations, other issues areas, black lives matter, climate change, all these areas that impact our lives to be able to lift up organizing practices and a more just world.

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>> Our young people protest they are part of coalitions, they are part of testifying and speaking out, they are part of multiple strategies, some strategies we do not name so their voices are part of that.

>> One way we could do that to get us here today is to lead Townhall hearings, and the hearing breaking silence has had the biggest impact in leveraging the most support because of the way it was set up of having a panel of commissioners, who listen to the issues that young people have Also made a commitment to addressing and working to the national issues with the institutions. These are politicians Heads of city agencies, funders, I would love to play a clip of a young woman by the name of Whitney.

>> This is a clip that we will show. Please feel free to write in any questions.

>> We talk about today, is thinking about and all the stories, oftentimes women in addition to doing these things, are responsible for caretaking.

>> While we are being harassed by those construction workers, walking home to feed our brothers and sisters, while we are dealing with the immigrants, Xena phobia, oppression, we're running with our mothers to the doctors offers -- doctors office.

>> We're cleaning up your bottles from our uncle, making sure -- will be can talk about today, is thinking about powerful stories and testimonies we have heard, women in addition to doing these things are responsible for caretaking, while we are being harassed by the construction workers, walking home, rushing home to feed our brothers and sisters, while we are dealing with the immigrants, Xena phobia, oppression, where running with our mothers to the doctors' offices to be translators, while young mothers are dealing with, this, we are cleaning up your bottles and making sure people are coming in safe at night, this adds undue

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pressure in our own lives, pushing us out of school, forcing us to get jobs, second for jobs, while we're still responsible for caretaking.

>> I feel after the testimony, I am mesmerized by everything you're saying and taking everything in, I believe each of the women here which share the same type of experience, for me to hear your stories, it's inspiring to me because it is like your strength and your courage and bravery supersedes anything I have experience, I would say through that, I know future champions and advocates and organizers are born out of this process.

>> You have given birth to a movement today and should be more than just a one-day Townhall but a continuum, this should be held in every borough in the city.

>> I came as one as was stated earlier, now I leave as 10,000. I thank you I see you, we see you, I charge everyone here today we have letters outside to sign so Mayor DeBlasio was brought on my brother's keeper campaign and brought on the challenge, can hear in New York City, we understand there's a model city for my brother's keeper because of the young initiative, because the challenge was brought on here we have a chance to challenge that challenge and bring on a gender inclusive lens and if we are the model lets model how we do this right.

>> We have nothing to lose but change. Our duty is to fight. Our duty is to win. Let's respect each other. We have nothing to lose.

>> Thank you for showing that.

>> There is a question, how are the students supported to give their testimony?

>> This process, this was huge. The room that you saw, there were two of those rooms. This was something we had to build up to, we had to work with the

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students for over eight weeks, these are young people who came from different organizations, you wanted to see all the issue areas, this was a seven hour day so it was a full day, there were a number of hands that supported and held as a community this process, having all the organizations say we will cosponsor this day. We will train social workers, there were nine of them in the state. We identified them There was childcare, the young people were recommended from the organizations based on issue areas. They were interviewed, it's not good to come in when what they need is shelter and support not to be telling their stories.

>> To be able to assess where they are, and to go through an eight-week process, around crafting their story and Getty things down to three minutes it was a hand on program, so it was interrupting the narrative because if you do all of these works for sexual violence, you're not listening.

>> Let's make things plain. That is how young people worked to prepare for that. And we had the brief with counselors, what you got to hear, was just a snippet of a seven-hour day, you heard about the issues and in the longer clip, that is on our website, we have a summary of the day, you get to hear solutions not just the problems.

>> We have multiple videos. We have 10 minutes left. I want to highlight this, which are the listening sessions. Every young women's initiative started with listening, everything needs to be addressed before we say your recommendations. So, we let the first national young women's session for the White House in 2015 the work is what shape the advancing equity, young people were part of the listening sessions, the young people are front and center and enjoying some of the success as well, as they do the work.



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- >> Some of them are still experiencing barriers. Another way in which we can center them, was to have conferences, conferences that speak on their Bill of Rights and through research and practice, if we were around, when the Constitution was being written, what would that be for us.
- >> Even today, we are not seeing those rights so being able to name for the cells, - name for themselves, name what it is that the Bill of Rights needs to look like.
- >> We did this through the black girls' conference, hundreds of people came to speak about their experiences.
- >> It was a beautiful conference, part of getting and shifting the narrative, around any of the work we have done, we need tools, and we have the media. This is influential, it is important that young people see themselves as being prepared.
  - >> You prepare them to be the ones who represent the media.
- >> Documentation is important, you want to track how you have done the work. And this is the framework. They were able to get technical assistance; every area looks different. So, developing in your community, some best practices and being able to share and lift those up is important.
- >> Of course, resourcing, I had to shift how I thought about money and resources and how I thought about my voice and our voice at the community who are often marginalized. We had to challenge the cultural norms around restrictions about asking so you have to frame an expectation that we are moving, and we are doing this together and your role is to resource, you want to have a role also to help you strategize.
- >> Over the years, we have encouraged young people to think about philanthropy and be a voice to shift.

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>> Concrete steps, I have named all social justice efforts, we were talking about immigration rights, environmental justice, where more successful and the belief is what has brought us here and has moved this work forward, there are number of concrete steps that you can take an experiment with to be successful in your community.

>> Thank you for listening. We have five minutes left. Any questions?

>> Thank you so much. This is wonderful work you are doing. It's amazing to see them to become leaders.

>> We can hope for deep changes in society with such leadership. That is practical. Thank you for sharing.

>> It's amazing to see the inspirational work you are doing. If there are any questions, any issues you have, let us know. Praxis staff members are available to you to answer your questions.

>> The next keynote will be in January. Class P is graduating in November. And class Q will not be far behind. You're going to do some great work. Thank you to everyone.

>> I would remind our listeners, when you go to disconnect from the presentation, you will be routed to an evaluation. We appreciate your feedback it helps us improve future programming that we provide.

>> The next keynote will be January 16. Joanne, thank you you are an incredible and inspiring leader and work you are doing for social chains -- change benefits all of you.

>> We all benefit from your efforts.

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>> This was so inspiring to me to listen to this. I took copious notes.

>> It was a privilege to be with you. We will close the session. Thank you.

Goodbye.

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