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Our Community is Our Campaign

Kabzuag Vaj, Freedom Inc.

July 17, 2019

>> Please stand by for real time captions.

>> Hi everybody, welcome. This is Liz the ALC and I'm going to first ask Shamita to get us started. We are ready.

>> Hello everyone. Welcome. On behalf of Praxis I welcome all of you to today's keynote address. I do have a bad throat so I may sound but I am here. As part of the ALC course. Is structured to explore really promoting subject matters. We have learned from academics, advisors and organizers social inequities to bring about justice and social change. Today we are very lucky to have an activist community organizer and grant who has sounded and continues to lead a unique organization that brings together change in our society. We have us transcend. Kabzuag is the founder free to make to end violence against women in a very particular way. Free to make organizes across age, residency status that congresses into separate us. As you will make us understand these boundaries these are totally unnecessary. Through her work working interest nationally. Tells about the technical information.

>> Thank you. As I said this is Liz Carlson the ALC. I would like to welcome. Some of your participants to the ALC. Welcome as well as to our discussion today. I am delighted to be with all of you as well as our keynote. I will focus since it is particularly new to some of you. I would like to call to your attention a couple of things. First of all there will not be any audio interaction between us and we encourage you to utilize for questions and comments any point in the

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conversation will be held by Shamita and Kabzuag and I will make a point to interject you are thinking please utilize that Q&A box freely throughout the presentation. I also would like to encourage you to download the materials in the lower portion of your screen. PDF of Kabzuag is PowerPoint is available to you now. In the last 10 minutes or so if you have any sort of audio distortion, you notice the sign quality is not great. Is a good possibility as a result of being connected through your Internet audio? I encourage you to call my telephone should that be a problem for you and the phone number is there on the screen. The sound quality becomes an issue for you can call it at any point. That does become an issue. Simply turned yours bigger volume off. This session is being recorded we will be posted to the ALC protected class webpage I'm excited for conversation to begin. I will turn it back to you Shamita .

>> Thank you, Liz. What would we do without you? We take time to go to the purpose of the keynote address program. You address occupies an important place have the learning center. I don't know what is going on here. I am listening to all kinds of

>> Thank you so much. So sorry about that everyone. Another tech glitch but Shamita let's continue.

>> The purpose of the keynote address. Important in the ALC advocacy learning. Designed to inspire are thinking and allows us to stretch our imagination, exercise our analytical muscles and sharpen our efficacy cells skills. Keynote take a very critical look at the way we advocate. And shape our work. In fact, what we learn from organizers challenges to fill better. To so today Kabzuag Vaj is with us and she is the founder of freedom Inc. and has dedicated her young life to ending gender-based violence. You can see her picture up there with her beautiful son was the future all of us. And it 20 years Kabzuag has better life working and social

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change within Southeast Asian immigrant communities. And co-owner a social enterprise that works with artisans. From the region southeast Asia. This is my dream to work with local artisans and Kabzuag is already doing it . Wonderful work Kabzuag. I will turn it over to you know. Let's go through.

>> This is Liz again. We might be having some phone issues with Kabzuag.

>> I am here.

>> I wonder if your computer, if you are on your Internet audio.

>> I am on my phone.

>> Let's go ahead.

>> That is 19. These are all folks who work at free to make, most of us. I think the next slide gives you info about myself. My story. I was born in Laos at the end of the American war in Southeast Asia. And my family lived in a refugee camp for about five years. Came to the US. Landed in Philadelphia. And my story of how my work as you can see how it will tie into all of this, I've been doing for the last 20 years. We landed in Philadelphia and there was no, US do not run had have a plan so we will be settled in some of the poorest neighborhoods throughout US. Those neighborhoods predominantly were black and brown folks who were living there, and we landed and within a year all the Southeast Asians the majority of us left the city and moved to Midwest. When we talked to Philadelphia in folks there is a story about in 1980. Who came through when the rest of the families, we left at the same time. Our work in Madison we moved to Madison, and we were living in the poorest neighborhoods in Madison. Also, very black and brown. I often tell the story because I think it ties into how Freedom Inc., my work was established and so when we resettled in Madison. What happens when we were growing up,

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we lived amongst each other, but we didn't living communities. So, we would go to school we had black neighbors, and we never played with and we never go to. My working gender justice. I started doing organizing work. When I started to do organizing work started organizing and we will go to these neighborhoods programming. The black girls in the neighborhood would say what about black girls and so that was I cannot create Freedom Inc. for just Southeast

>> My family lived that type of life and I was prohibited as a young girl from doing many things. Gender role restrictions and one of the things I noticed was that every time we would have a family gathering, the men with the separately from the women. Oftentimes the women would set the tables and it really young age the terminology for what patriarchy looks like or what injustice looks like. I didn't file something that I wanted to continue to live. And so, at a very young age I remember some of the and I remember being in the kitchen a small little kitchen in his apartment and I was eating with evidence is eating for my mom cells I am eating for everybody. I fell in some sense of injustice about having to cook all day and set the table and sometimes not having the best food that was left over for women and children in a way creating my own justice. From a very young age I do not even have a terminology and you want to live like that. And so being created Freedom Inc. I want to create a world want to live in. And that would be made for women and girls. Where LGBTQ young people can have a place to go to Internet world, I wanted to see what it looked like. And so that's how Freedom Inc. really started. It started with me every Tuesday for Southeast Asian work; they had dropped out of high school. Every day would come to work in., There was nothing for them. And I made a promise every training everything that I have learned I would teach back to them and what I noticed is within a year, there lies that changed. I wanted to show that there is a world of these apartment complexes be listed, that there was a different world we live, and we can dream and whatever

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door would open for me I will. All of them dropouts. Going back to school, I saw that making changes and connecting and really changing and that's when I created Freedom Inc. It was started by young people women and girls. It was a dream about serving our whole community and we went from just being, to not having a multi-gendered. We work with trans-folks, gender nonconforming, we have we work with children ages six all the way to 80-year-olds. We are multiethnic. Cambodian. We are also multigenerational multiethnic multiracial it is not something that is fostered in the Midwest.

>> I'm going to jump in and ask you a couple of questions. My mind is just annoying. This is amazing work you do. One of the things you said written beginning without resources. That has become a big deal where is this money coming from and gives it. And they are the ones who control how did you accomplish that. That would be might be question, with little resources. And really questioning the fundamental basis of your community, which is patriarchy. And talking about long this. I would love for you to address that a little bit. I also want to invite the participants is point if you like to ask questions please write them down in the chat room and we will bring it to Kabzuag. Feel free.

>> Three things that came to mind run a question is at the very beginning there was with or without funding my community needed services and mobilizing and organizing. If I had to do it as volunteers. And that's really basically something from the start. And even to the day we have gone from a budget of nothing to 15 years later to almost a \$3 million budget. It is really out of pride because of one we are in the Midwest. On top of that we are not in Minnesota or in Chicago. We are basically in Wisconsin where there is not a lot of philanthropy. On top of that the type of work you do is pretty radical for the state and so funding is not easily gotten to do the work the organizing work that we do. But I say that to say even

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from this budget, having nothing to having this large budget list. I still believe that the end of the day if it all came down to it, and we stop getting funded we still have to organize. Ever followed, I never chased money. And I want to say that in all honesty, we were a small organization for almost 10 years. With a budget less than \$500,000 and that I was creating and building leadership within a community that was not so that communities for, your folks, young folks, I even I remember not finding the right people to even fulfill that. That I had to develop and build a leadership within my community so I, the work was showing that we would be able to accomplish what we out to do. And so, I never chased money even if money was given to us, and to meet the needs or the mission and vision of Freedom Inc. I just didn't take it. Number two one of the things I've learned a long time ago is that people build, want to build solidarity and multiethnic organizations. But are not ready to share resources. One of the things that when we became an organization. One of the things that is true. Up until the pricing, the killing of Mike Brown it has been extremely hard to find specific funding to do gender-based violence were. What I have learned is when we said we need something for us, and I said I can't be your leader, but I know how to create. What I found a leader that could lead there is no funding. I make the call and I had to say I have to split funding. And so, I really do believe like you have to put resources to where you want to build. The same goes with the component of Freedom Inc. When we do not have funding that we take funding that works for everybody and just specifically retained, to do that project and so you need to put resources where you intend to grow and where you make commitments. I want to talk about funding is it is really hard. I think that being a social justice organization people think that you either are, especially doing domestic violence and sexual assault were and gender-based violence I see throughout the 20 years of work you are either a service organization or you are or as I organizing and that

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you rarely me. You can just serve people. You have to build people's capacity to be their own leaders on changes because gender-based violence cannot [Indiscernible] on the other hand organizing alone especially if you are working with and black and brown these you cannot just organize without meeting basic service needs. One of our successes, in order for me to ask to come and testify and become a leader and become an organizer, I also have to make sure she gets her medicine, I also sure she is posing a secure. We provide services along with developing the leadership capacity of each of the members for services. Shamita does that answer your question ?

>> You so much. Thank you. Again, please feel free to all the participants, please feel free to write your questions in the chat box. And I Liz or Dennis will convey that to Kabzuag . Please go ahead. There are questions popping up.

>> So far, just before responding to say how I did and inspiring your presentation is one of our participants is wondering if you want to have coffee sometime.

>> Yes, definitely. I think the thing about Freedom Inc.'s work is if it is about fighting for land rights, we believe that just because you are a victim coming in for services doesn't mean you also can't be a champion for change in the community, and that it is our responsibility no matter how long it takes to build your capacity to be for yourself. I can tell you all the elders easy, it is for the last 20 years. And so, it's a lifetime commitment. Unlike other services where people come in, I remember starting off as a domestic violence and people saying they are coming for services, you are not supposed to know that in the community, don't look at them and don't talk. With our services, we wanted to know let me know and we see them. And in the community, we spent the majority of the elders as they come through our doors whether they come through as a victim or survivor or somebody services a stable is for a lifetime. The Cambodian there are Cambodian

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programs of these elders for five years. Have been with me since the beginning of the program. And so, it is also the same with the black elders. A lot of our young people come in when they are in elementary school and they stay with us until they are all the way through college. If they stay in town or through my school. And many of them stay on so our motto is you, and we build your capacity and if you show great leadership you can also become part of our staff and our team. We really believe that the answers in the community.

>> This is Liz. I had a question. Just around the intergenerational asked act of the work that you do. And any sort of navigation and or difficulty or challenges that you might have had in terms of convincing your community about the connections and the interconnections the organizing work that you do with black communities. Was at challenging within yourself East Asian communities?

>> Definitely. One of the things we work on daily because many of us, all of us were not black, we have to wake up every day to dismantle and work towards improving and changing our, and also being more pro-black. When Freedom Inc. became so these Asian and black organization, we lost a lot of our Southeast Asian members. And volunteers because it was not something that they agreed to and it is not something that they wanted to do to make changes. I can tell you that many of the people who are with me at the beginning are no longer with. Those are really hard changes. I can tell you that it is not something that is easily changed. It is something we have to work every day. It has been 10 years that we become an organization and I can say we still have issues. Some of the things that one of the lessons that I've learned is that it's not enough to be anti-black. You actually have to have policies embedded in your foundation of the organization to also be pro-black. I can tell you one of the things that we struggle, we just need a change in his a lot of our black staff do a lot of labor and a lot of educational labor

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and do a lot of helping us to understand feminism helping us to build our foundation and they do a lot of training what happened was that we had to really look at the a rate and I had to staff. One Southeast Asian and one black any black person was trading everybody and I looked at that, the antiblack thing is we respect both of you and we treat you whatever the pro-black thing to do was somebody is pulling their weight another and how you compensate up? Just going beyond next and in my mind, we understand what I think I understand. Also teaching, you teach elders. Were refugees and survivors and to really the team who is in your program. If you can do that and you can make those to coexist, and understand that their liberationist tied to each other, then you have really started to do the work and I can tell you that we are really upfront about the type of work that we do. We tell we weekly group gatherings of different groups we have elders who come every week, we have black elders, Cambodian elders, and we tell all of the people who participate in our programs that we are a black and Southeast Asian organization and if they cannot get along or they cannot deal with black people and black staff are probably not the agency for them to join. We are really upfront that we are also really is about the identities and staff and how servant how we work. Even like I said elders who may not understand that. We work with them weekly to do political education on all of these issues so they can understand what type of organization you are. Is ongoing conversation, it is I think that it is easy to work with people who are ready have some sort of understanding. But because we are working with community members who may or may not have an acceptance you may come to the table with antiblack this we are willing to spend time with them. If you are an older and you don't understand issues and no one has ever taught you these are things you just have the opportunity to have a conversation we get that we are here to build that in here to have conversations as long as you need. If you have been with us for 10 years

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and you are still antiblack we may not be the agency for you. You may be able to find services or support somewhere else but we as a black Southeast Asian organization may not be the agency for you. We are very clear.

>> Thank you for that Kabzuag. I think it's remarkable to help people understand that liberationist tied to each other screen. Thank you for that.

>> Can I go back a little bit? What is tremendously exciting to me is when you say addressing root causes date and interpersonal violence. One of the things that we accept here or believe that the state is benign. The state is working with us to and interpersonal violence, where some of it might be but there is also a lot of violence by the state that has affected. Could you address that just a little bit?

>> Sure.

>> Thank you for reminding me. That's why I stayed on this slide. I just forgot. I think it's important that we address not only the root causes of our interpersonal violence but we have to understand that for many of our communities state violence is equally detrimental to her health for the Southeast Asian folks at Freedom Inc., state violence looks like surviving just like surviving war, refugee camps in here and surviving question. All of these things. It gives us a unique opportunity to talk about some of the things that we are witness that I personally have witnessed and come to learn a lot about is that violence against - and queer and black people . And that when we work to address root causes of gender-based violence it is not enough to talk about the violence that is experienced at the home, but we also need to address the violence that people experience in the state. One of the things that a lot of what Freedom Inc. does is we have a campaign. The reason why that is a gender-based violence issue for Freedom Inc. is that cops are in schools disproportionately impacting black girls.

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Disproportionately impacts queer people in a way that here in medicine middle school 80% of the those who get referred to disciplinary action and middle schools are black girls. And so, we see that as a health issue, we see that as a gender-based violence issue against black girls and on top of that some of the things we've been working on is survived and punished. Many of the black women we work with are also survivors of domestic violence because of antiblack miss and racism within the justice system they are often times not seen as victims many of the work that we do is the difference in helping provide direct services to black folks were victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and we also have to advocate for them in the criminal justice system because they are also seen as not only the victims but the perpetrator. And so, these are some things that we work on and analyze and also seeing how the state is oppressive. Detrimental to the health.

>>

>> I'm sure there will be more questions, but we will take them later.

>> Are we on until 3 o'clock?

>> Until 3 o'clock 330. We are halfway through.

>> I wanted to make sure. Our gender justice work how we do our work. Their entry points could be as somebody needing services somebody or somebody who is volunteering. Majority of people that we serve the majority of the people that leadership with that are members were people that actually came through to get services. Predominately people from our communities and one of the things that's been really great about Freedom Inc. is we hire from within the community.

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We hire people who have life experiences like this. We don't really necessarily have to promote our programs. What you see here this is ever evolving. And we estimate they join our weekly groups. Thinking that isolation is really key to gender-based violence thriving and someone's people can hear and learn from each other and share with each other what we find is that they are less isolated and then what we also find is peer to peer help is really important. Every week we have groups for Cambodian, and black folks were ages six all the way to 80. And we work with them year-round every week and it is very linguistically appropriate. It is socially appropriate, it is age-appropriate, and we make sure that we are very specific. That there are opportunities for these groups to come together. Have bigger events where young folks and older folks and folks from different ethnic and racial backgrounds can make connections and network throughout the week, they had their own spaces. We also believe not only do they come to us when we don't necessarily meet their service needs. We also believe in building their analysis on why things are happening. We have only called freedom tools. We take two or three days we take a group of people in villages go into and all the different things that they want to learn. It could be about patriarchy, and blackness, queer justice, police and school, whatever it is that groups have identified we trend we are building some of the analysis to be a better MK for themselves. On top of that we identify key people within these groups we feel they can be emerging leaders. Probably become staff. Support services just for volunteers. To really build capacity to become our staff or team leaders. Become our advisory committee, and the way we do that is we also have, they can shadow staff, or they come in as an entry paid, not paid volunteer, but paid contractor where they can learn the leadership pipeline. And root cause and challenging depression, it is important that we teach people that it is important to help them understand they have to organize. It can't just be you understand that you

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actually have to put it into practice. This is just a pretty picture of Freedom Inc. . I can see the questions, so people have questions, type it in.

>> So far people have just been commenting on how inspiring the presentation is. Although we do have a comment that just came in about a question asking what successful campaign or where this project was most successful last year and what were your greatest challenge is gathering support from programs and services during that campaign? And then also asking how you remedied challenges. The things you were challenged by.

>> When you are working with went multi-gendered multigenerational groups at the People's entry point to understanding social justice and impact on communities are very different. And so last year, in the past two years one of our bigger campaigns has been to get cops out of schools. We started with about four staff volunteers, really just listening, going to hearings, talking to school board members and really just trying to get an understanding of what is happening and how it impacts girls. And impacts young people in schools and particularly black people, black students. The success was that after two years of following this campaign, from just a few people, we did not win the vote to get cops out of schools but we won the community and that is we had a mural, our mayor was pretty much all the schools seats were off for a lesson and the number one conversation every single candidate here you would go to was what were people stands getting comps on schools. We went from basically just a few students watching this issue to the last one, we had 50 community members testifying and hundreds of people coming out but the fact that every single elected official had to answer the question was because we had brought up Southeast Asian and black people have brought this issue. We were able to take bodies. It's a gender-based violence issue. The reason why it's important for people in the gender

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justice movement to think about thinking beyond just domestic violence and sexual assault as campaigns really tying it to the rest of what is happening, and I think the school is one of those great examples. One of the challenges was how we now get elders to come out to support young people? It can't just be the young people are saying in schools are bad for me as a black team, but we get grandmothers to say it is hurting my black team, is hurting my grandchildren, highway also show support and speak out? That we have come to a point where we Southeast Asian grandmothers were like I am going to come to the hearing. Plant grandmothers were late next time I am going to speak and we even have the school board, we lost by one vote but now they are saying we want to try out, we want to remove one of the cost from one of the schools and I think it's been a great campaign. The thing about Freedom Inc. and the reason why campaigns are not important to me is when I thought of Freedom Inc. I really thought about the community. And I sat there will be campaigns , legislation, systems in place to make sure that black and brown people don't make it. These are systems of, to have hundreds of years of policies and foundations they were created to keep people, so the campaign can't just be about winning a campaign or winning a legislation or winning a policy. If I can move people from point a to point B. And their understanding and their efficacy of their leadership that is already a when. Our tagline is the community is the campaign. Is really true. The community continues to be the campaign and win or lose legislation policies whatever even if it doesn't that if you are able to move the hearts and minds of people and especially those who are impacted their lives have been impacted and changed that you have one the campaign. I always measure whether it is a win or not based on how far we have been able to communities.

>> Thank you Kabzuag .

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>> One of our newest projects, can you believe that we started as a gender-based violence specifically domestic violence sexual assault organization. But as you can see because you are working to and also not just interpersonal violence, we also now have a project that is very specific to civic engagement. To building people power through civic engagement. Voting and getting people register. Go back to what I said, I am not going to chase funding. When a funder, we were approached and said you would be a good fit for this under. This funder specifically wanted to find civic engagement, traditional civic engagement work. And with Asians. And so, one of the things that I said to her was I am not interested in engaging whole communities around civic engagement. Because I feel like our niche is very specific. And so, I was able to move her to funding Freedom Inc., to do civic engagement work with specifically to focus on women and girls, queer folks, Southeast Asian and wax. At the time I think that she didn't believe in it, but I can tell you that being that specific has really changed the landscape of Madison. And Wisconsin. We were able to come when you work with women and girls and those were most marginalized, you really work with communities and you bring out the whole community. This is one of our, a highly us how we transform in the last 10 years. These are our Cambodian elders. Each of the different populations have different campaigns. Here they are fighting for funding to continue Elder services. Queer justice as you all can see . We believe in building the leadership of queer folks, black folks, Southeast Asian folks. And this is a slide, it was one of our love is love campaign. Believing we can create a different world, a world where my child can be any gender. So, we can stop for questions of people have them. If they can go into some of our lessons learned.

>> Please go ahead. And to all of you, go ahead if you have thoughts and comments. We still have a bit of time yet in the presentation. Chat them in and I will make sure that Kabzuag has an opportunity to respond.

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>> Some of the things, some of the major lessons that I've learned in this work I think the most heartbreaking one is probably the Southeast Asian and wax solidarity one. No matter how hard you work, just like men who have to wake up every day, I will miss him when he said not a woman they have to wake up [Indiscernible]. I feel as a nonblack person and the way that racism is set up is based on how dark and how black you are. That is, the line for how races people are towards you. As a Southeast Asian person, not being black, I have to wake up every day and dismantle and also work towards my anti-blackness work towards being more pro-black. And I feel like this is something that Freedom Inc. even though we work at it every day, we still struggle with it a lot. And like I shared with you all, when we first started to become a Southeast Asian and black organization many of the Southeast Asian folks left and also many of the black folks who could not be in partnership with Southeast Asian people left the organization. I had to start over. Some of the lessons I've learned, it is not all that, but I feel like we have been able to figure some stuff out. One of the things we learned was that when we were in campaign against the police, we have learned is as Southeast Asian people, Southeast Asian women and our bodies because of racism is valued differently and so when we do direct action, Southeast Asian folks, we put ourselves in our bodies first because we know that our black folks would get arrested differently so these were some of the things that we have learned over the years. Also, just in the way that we work within our community because anti-blackness we are learning how not to appropriate black culture. For Southeast Asian folks we grew up among black folks and so sometimes even within our own communities, within our own people, there is appropriate of black culture. We talked a lot about how can pop loves black culture. But don't love the black people. So, these are lessons that we have been learning. We have also learned that we have to understand even if policing doesn't impact Cambodian

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victims and survivors, that we have to come up with a response. Within our communities against our communities in the way that is in alignment with our black program. If prison abolition is something that the black component of Freedom Inc. really talks about and wants to do what is out? When a crime has happened. So, one of the things for example something that just happened, one of our teens got there are stolen. The first thing she wanted to do was she wanted to call the police and then after thinking through it she posted on Facebook and basically just told her story. I'm a young person if you took my car please return. I want to ask. And the next day somebody returned for car. These are things that we are learning as we are going along just because something is good for our community doesn't necessarily mean it is good for the black community. And then the multi-gender multigenerational, I think that it's been a really hard lesson for us because I think that the elders assumed that the young folks don't want to learn from them in the young folks assume the elders are disrespectful. How do you create programs where you can bring six-year-olds and teens and grandmothers and sometimes when they don't even the same language? How do you do work and make sure that they understand that the liberation is tied to each other? Especially because many of them different sides of the world. And how do you get somebody to understand genocide is very similar to the incarceration of black people. These are things that we always have conversations. One of the other things I would like to share with you all is more recent. As we have been around for the last 20 years, 16 Inc., during the time that we have done our work we have men come in the door and if you are working with women, they also come through the organization have, come through when they for services when they are in elementary school in the state through high school. How do you keep manner around? How do you create programs and if you do or don't even create programs for these are the kind of conversations

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we're having? The husband of our coworkers, they are going to be around this is a gender nonconforming space how do these men interact in our spaces? Are they allowed in hours basis and if they are allowed how do they change the makeup and who is empowered and who has power, and this is something we are grappling with how we want to be intentional about? All these women we have employed that are coming through, they are changing, their analysis is deepening but they go home to the same person who hasn't had the same opportunity. What we have found is there is a lot of conflict. We started this or, for men and boys who support Freedom Inc. We can do that without being intentional and on top of that at Freedom Inc. is going to lead this group? These are really good conversations to have a heat conversation around how they should be. And so, these are all things that we are grappling with. We are continuously grappling with Southeast Asian by solidarity. And then on top of that we are prison abolition is so how do we also do our work and keep communities safe? How do we start have conversations about what is safety and what is 80 look what? Across different genders, across different racial groups. And so yes, it's a lot of things, these are all things that you all are consistently thinking about so I think we're going to have a facilitated conversation around what we think and our men and boys work and what that is going to look like.

>> Your work is so phenomenal. We have a comment from Kim. She says bridging generations such important work. Unifying work. Work between human beings and strengthening our connections. Are very apparent and it is beautiful. Thank you so much talking today. I feel very inspired. Please forgive me if I am not pronouncing it correctly. She writes [Indiscernible] which is thank you. It is amazing the work that you do. A couple of things. What I have felt that you have been tackling once of the obstacles that discourage most of us. And not only you do not get discouraged. You keep pushing it and challenging your community to

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live up to it. Which is the way it should be but most of us fall apart when there is a pushback from the community. I know that you have, it took you a long time but if you can talk a little bit about the time, that it doesn't happen overnight. But it does happen. That would be really helpful. How long did it take for you to reach the generational gaps and community, black community and Southeast Asian community, those kinds of gaps? How long do you think it took you?

>> I think we are not there yet. I think the difference, and I agree with you I think the difference between our work at Freedom Inc. and other people's work is that we work at every day. It's not something where it is the training every three months, it is every day. We really believe that is not enough to build solidarity. It is not enough to be allies. We are actually building a family. If you're not breaking bread, is black teens and grandmothers cannot use the same household and you are really not building. I believe that the only way to do it, my codirector and I have been together for 10 years. We made a commitment that we would be family and that we would show our community when it looks like two bills together and that it was not going to be a valid solidarity, but she and I would be family. I think that is going to take a lifetime. The difference between an organization like free to make, Freedom Inc. , is that we actually believe that we are family number one. We work at every day. And we have a process of accountability when we mess up that when we mess up, we don't start we just keep trying again and again and so I feel like I can tell you that when I have seen it takes at least 10 years to build, to have somebody walk through our door and be in need of everything. And living through trauma and all of those things for them to really come out on the other end to be a leader that we can count on that will, is leading movement and our young person who is now leading our cops out of school campaigns, she came to us at 16 years old. She is 28 and she is our director of youth organizing. And spent almost 10 years. We've been really

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building with her, more than 10 years. We have been building with her and to see her go through that and if you like social justice movements, investing in people, people need to be in it for the long haul. Oftentimes that not is not how people are thinking about social justice movement does not help you think about providing services. And so, I am in it for the long haul. That is my answer. I think you have to be in it for the long haul to make these changes. As far as how we get people to understand issues and anti-blackness. I think just we are on the if you want services here, if you want to help, these are things that are nonnegotiable. Even if it is my 76 rules, my mother. Having the last 20 years of working with her to get her to a point where she can say I have a chosen family member who is queer , gender nonconforming black team. To get her to the place has been the last 20 years. I feel like will have to be committed.

>> This is so important. We have been trained on those, to be impatient, to get things done quickly. I think this is so important that you are the social justice work. It does not happen overnight. Particularly when we are talking about important intersectional work. That is very helpful. Anyone else asking? There is still time so please feel free to instance. Feel free to ask any question they. I am asking because I happen to be a community organizer in my community also. So, what was interesting is the idea of feminism. That you brought in. And what would it look like in Southeast Asian community. I can say that some of the most brilliant arguments and discussions and conversations I have had is to query feminism as it happens, as it is appropriate for our community. And coming from a very colonized background don't think this is - so it was, I really learned and embraced it in my own way while bringing in colonization, critique of colonization, critique of there are other types of imperialism and all of that into a. I would love to hear if you would want to share how is that working in your community. I think we have five minutes or so. It's really put you in a limited square.

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>> The question about feminism. Can you rephrase the question?

>> I am asking what is like one of the early slides you talk about is in the Southeast Asian community. How do you define it and how did it work for you?

>> I think this is a really great way to end the conversation. I feel like we can't really talk about feminism in this country without talk about the influence of lack in our thoughts and ideology analysis. Giving black from his basically prompts for how things that some of our thoughts. But I think one of the things that I often talk about is for those less we didn't have access to study black feminism, I talk a lot about feminism and understanding in the way we live, and the way we experience it so you don't necessarily have to have this deep analysis that was talk to you but I think just being a woman and surviving gender-based violence and genocide and war and all of these things I think I came into feminism and understanding what it looks like in a way that was through my lived experiences. As through seeing it in my mother surviving being a second wife and seeing the abusive international marriage is happening and all of these things that I lived through, I feel like feminism for women has been something that we have not had an opportunity to have conversations about. And I'm sure for a lot of South Asian women to. How do we then start to talk about what does feminism for Asian women? What does this look like for women? Sometimes people use it to loosely, but it is about surviving and thriving even when you are not meant to. And so, people often ask where you get your ideology from? Where do you get your analysis from? As somebody who wasn't allowed to or have access to information and my people being refugees and not having a strong background having people to learn from, I have had to really grapple with that and come to terms with my own urbanism and fighting it so I feel like it is about redefining and within the context of what is happening in the world but also there are different

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technologies that we can come with, come up with ourselves that pertain to our own feminism. I'm really excited to really think about this in the next 10 years really excited to help communities like mine or even my own community to really understand what feminism looks like for us. It's been amazing 20 years. But in the last 10 years learn from the black feminist movement and now really helping women a country that is a little bit different but, what does feminine feminism look like to them? I'm really excited. I think you and I should continue to have this conversation off-line. What is to redesign it and come up with our own terminology I think it is different.

>> That is exciting. I would love to and learn a lot from you. We are coming to almost at the end of our session. And one more time I want to ask the participants if you have any questions that you want to write, we still have time for getting hold of Kabzuag and asking her to respond. Other than that, I want to tell you how exciting it is, and recently speak with you I learned so much. And you are so wonderful and amazing work they are doing. With Freedom Inc. how to organize across barriers that we think are barriers. And what is important to recognize, you can organize without. Without those they are no longer barriers actually facilitators. Thank you so much for sharing your work and your vision with us. Any last words you want to say. Thank you all for listening and I hope to be able to in many different spaces. Thank you for having me.

>> Thank you so much. Liz, do you have anything to say. Once this webinar is over you are all going to receive a link evaluation.

>> That's right. That's right. Is indeed. When you connect and I will thank you in advance for your feedback. It benefits us designating and designing and our keynotes to serve you. Thank you for taking the time and giving us and sharing your thoughts with us. I want to echo, thank you so much. Indeed, your keynotes

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are and the work that you do is so inspiring. Working at the intersections of personal and mutual thank you. And Shamita as always thank you for your elegant and proficient hosting time together for all of you enjoy the rest of your day. And the rest of your summer. We will be together and October for our next Kino. And until then take care and be well. Thanks everyone

>> If you have questions feel free to send it and I know including the coffee please feel free to write to them and we will respond to. Thank you so much. This is been amazing. Thanks, Kabzuag and Liz and Alina. Wonderful. And to all of you, thank you so much.

>> Have a good afternoon. Goodbye. And [Event Concluded]