

**Meeting Notes**

February 2014

This month’s topic was Social Justice Philanthropy. COFIE members Cindy Chang and Brenda Sears facilitated the session.

After welcome and introductions, Jamie led the group through an ice-breaker activity that encouraged participants to learn more about each other.

There was a PowerPoint presentation for this session and two handouts. The handouts were sent ahead of time by Jamie Morgan. The PowerPoint will be attached to these notes when emailed to COFIE members. All of this information will also be available soon at the COFIE website.

Highlights from the session:

1. Cindy and Brenda asked the group “why are people poor?” Answers included systems, capitalism, The Man, economy, bad luck, history, illness, no safety net, cycle of poverty, single parent, education, opportunity, and access.
2. The group was shown a picture of a woman holding up a sign that said she was a single mom and that she needed money. The group was asked to respond to the question – “What are the people in the other cars thinking of her?” Answers included:
* Is she lying?
* Where are her kids?
* What happened?
* She’s an alcoholic.
* She’s lazy.
* Get a job.
* Where’s her husband?
* Are there programs to help her?
1. Participants were split into small groups and given a scenario about a “hungry person” to discuss. The scenario described a young woman of color with two children. She had been on welfare for four years and in a welfare-to-work program. Her situation changed and she finds herself in need of help. Each group was asked to answer these questions:
* What solution does your organization propose (short and long term)?
* Whom does the organization see is at fault?
* How does the organization see its relationship with the woman?
* Who do you think would oppose the work of the organization?
* What kind of power relationship is reinforced or changed by the work of the organization?
* What are the advantages of this approach?
* What are the disadvantages of this approach?

**Next steps:**

1. Erin will contact a person she thinks is perfect to contribute to the April session.
2. Please review the 2014 calendar and let Jamie know if you are interested in helping with any session. You could send relevant materials and links, co-present, suggest presenters, etc.
3. We confirmed that over the course of the year, we will read the book -
“Tempered Radicals: How Everyday Leaders Inspire Change at Work” by Debra Meyerson. Our December conversation will be based on the book.
4. Jamie and Erin will type up meeting notes and send them out to all.
5. Please remember to RSVP for each meeting (yes or no). It’s helpful for Erin with snacks, etc. but more so for Jamie. Sometimes the number of people attending matters when she is developing the structure and format of a meeting.