

a report on *From Margins to Center Listening Sessions*, an initiative of the Racial & Economic Equity for Survivors Project (REEP)

# showing up

how we see, speak, and disrupt racial inequity facing survivors of domestic and sexual violence

**facilitated and authored in partnership**

**Zoe Flowers & Tonya Lovelace**

Women of Color Network, Inc.

**Camille Holmes**

CDH Consulting

**Lisalyn Jacobs, Erika Sussman & Sara Wee**

Center for Survivor Agency & Justice

**Mona Muro**

Texas Council on Family Violence

# **SHOWING UP**

HOW WE SEE, SPEAK, AND DISRUPT RACIAL  
INEQUITY FACING SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC  
AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

A REPORT ON *FROM MARGINS TO CENTER LISTENING SESSIONS*,  
AN INITIATIVE OF THE RACIAL & ECONOMIC EQUITY FOR  
SURVIVORS PROJECT (REEP)

**FACILITATED AND AUTHORED IN PARTNERSHIP:**

**ZOE FLOWERS & TONYA LOVELACE**

WOMEN OF COLOR NETWORK, INC.

**CAMILLE HOLMES**

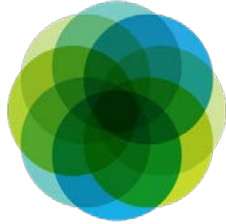
CDH CONSULTING

**LISALYN JACOBS, ERIKA SUSSMAN & SARA WEE**

CENTER FOR SURVIVOR AGENCY & JUSTICE

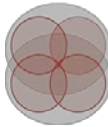
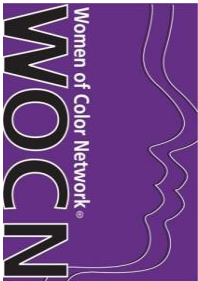
**MONA MURO**

TEXAS COUNCIL ON FAMILY VIOLENCE



## CENTER FOR SURVIVOR AGENCY & JUSTICE

THE RACIAL & ECONOMIC EQUITY FOR SURVIVORS PROJECT IS A  
NATIONAL PROJECT IN COLLABORATION WITH:



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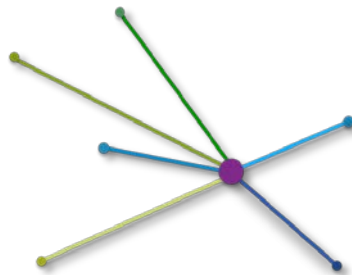
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SOUTHWEST CENTER  
FOR LAW AND POLICY

& race equity partners, Camille Holmes and Bill Kennedy



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## Racial & Economic Equity for Survivors Project (REEP): Responding to the Field

Advocates and attorneys in the domestic and sexual violence field have asked for tools, strategies, and language to help them more effectively engage issues of race, racism, equity, and inclusion as they arise in their work. The Center for Survivor Agency and Justice (CSAJ) joined with an interdisciplinary group of partners to create a project that would explore and begin to meet this community defined need. The Legal Impact for Racial & Economic Equity of Survivors Project (REEP) seeks to increase organizational capacity to address racial and other structural and institutional biases that pose barriers to economic stability for survivors of color.

REEP Partners include CSAJ, Women of Color Network, Inc. (WOCN), the Southwest Center for Law and Policy (SCLP), the Asian Pacific Islander Institute on Gender-Based Violence (APIGBV), Casa de Esperanza (Casa), the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV), the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, and racial equity consultants, Bill Kennedy, The Law Offices of Bill Kennedy, and Camille Holmes, CDH Consulting.

REEP created the *From Margins to Center* Listening Sessions to facilitate dialogue across the field and gather insights from advocates, attorneys and survivors about needs, current state, and future hopes for survivor-driven systems advocacy, and practice recommendations that advance racial and economic equity. The *From Margins to Center* Listening Sessions were developed and facilitated by REEP Partners WOCN, CSAJ, TCFV and CDH Consulting. This report shares the observations, questions, reflections, and hopes of the *From Margins to Center* Listening Session participants.

# SHOWING UP

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RACIAL INEQUITY FACING  
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# Introduction: Why Racial Equity and Why Now?

*“Racial equity is about applying justice and a little bit of common sense to a system that’s been out of balance. When a system is out of balance, people of color feel the impacts most acutely, but, to be clear, an imbalanced system makes all of us pay.”*

*–Glenn Harris, President of Race Forward (and formerly the Center for Social Inclusion)*

Racial inequity is real – as are inequities resulting from oppression across multiple identity factors – and it manifests in unique ways for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Despite this reality, people fear talking about it, whether for fear of being labeled a racist or fear of being retaliated against for speaking up or fear from not knowing how to talk about it much less take action. This fear also “shows up” in our work, limiting our ability to address the roots and consequences of violence and often reproducing the same inequities within our organizations. This report responds to the state of racial inequity now because the field has called for more open struggle, dialogue, and action. As is stated throughout the report, it’s about “inward and outward work for equity” and about acknowledging the realities and centering the experiences of those most marginalized in order to make our systems and responses work better for everyone.

Like the [“canaries in the coal mine”](#) analogy where birds alerted coal-miners to a toxic and dangerous atmosphere, “[domestic violence and sexual assault are the coal mine, and survivors of color, Native survivors, LGBT survivors, immigrant survivors, and survivors with disabilities are the canaries.]<sup>1</sup> When you fix the mine for the canary, you make the mine safer for everyone. When you make the system work for the most marginalized and at risk, you help the system work better for everyone.” --Lisalyn Jacobs, National Network for Domestic Violence, 2nd Annual Economic Justice Summit

## Racial Inequity is Real

**Domestic and sexual violence impact everyone. Statistically, however, domestic and sexual violence disproportionately impact those who are most marginalized in society.** In the United States, while we often hear the statistic that 1 in 3 of *all* women will experience domestic violence in their lifetime, women of color are much more likely to experience abuse (closer to 1 in 2 for some racial and ethnic groups).<sup>i, ii, iii</sup> (Fig. 1) These racial inequities persist alongside, compound, and are compounded by other oppressions. Already facing gender bias and sexism, women who are marginalized by virtue of immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity, class, language access, and disability are more likely to experience domestic violence than cis-gendered, heterosexual, upper middle class, English speaking, able-bodied, White, U.S.-born women. People living at the intersections of multiple marginalized identities – e.g. a deaf Korean American

<sup>1</sup> Many have used this analogy and are quick to point out that the canary is merely the first, and not the only party to suffer from adverse mine conditions. Thus, they argue that the solution is to improve the atmosphere in the mine overall, not to provide a separate breathing apparatus for the canary. See, Crenshaw, Kimberle Williams, [“The Girls Obama Forgot.”](#) New York Times. July 29, 2014, Guinier, Lani and Torres, Gerald. [The Miner’s Canary: Enlisting Race, Resisting Power, and Transforming Democracy.](#) (Harvard Press, 2003).

FIG. 1  
Women Experiencing Domestic Violence, By Race/Ethnicity



FIG. 2  
Experiencing Domestic Violence, By Identity Factors

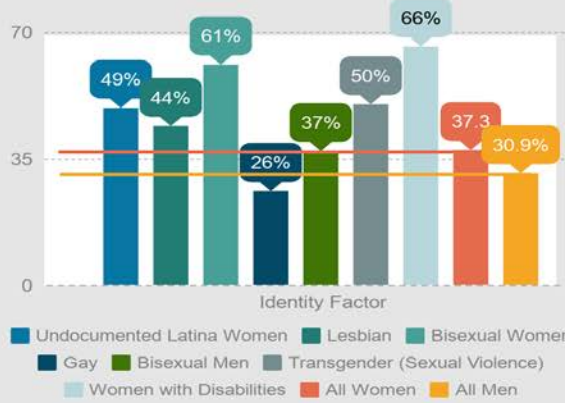
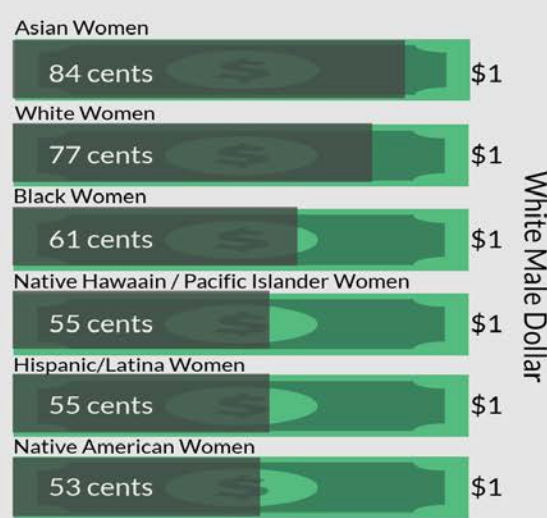


FIG. 3  
Gender & Racial Pay Gap





woman, a trans Columbian immigrant – tend to experience even higher rates of violence.<sup>iv</sup> (Fig. 2)

**Women living in poverty are nearly twice as likely to experience domestic violence, and people of color are more likely to live in poverty.** The persistence of pay inequity suggests that White women are, on average, more able to access the economic resources needed for safety (e.g. transportation, housing, legal costs). For example, while the overall gender pay gap shows that women make eighty-cents to the male dollar, women of color actually earn much less (e.g. Black women earn \$0.61, Latina and Pacific Islander women earn \$.55, and Native American women only earn \$0.53 for every White-male dollar).<sup>v</sup> (Fig. 3)

**Personal income matters in accessing resources needed for safety, but so does support from family, friends, and social or community networks. Research suggests White women have greater access to these resources.** For example, [in a study of African American women in shelter](#), Black women were more likely to be living in poverty, to be the sole providers, have less access to a car, and were more likely to stay at the shelter longer than their White counterparts. The researchers stated that institutionalized racism made it more difficult (and thus took longer) to acquire the resources needed to leave shelter, as did less availability of community support.

**Recent research has demonstrated a [racial wealth gap](#) in our society, and that [poverty is different](#) for Black and White people.** By examining the net worth of households – which calculates income along with assets like home ownership, stocks, and business equity compared to one’s debts or liabilities – we see that, on average, White households have a net worth of \$141,900 compared to \$11,000 for Black households and \$13,700 for Hispanic/Latino households – that’s 13-times as much. [And in a study of debt collection lawsuits](#) in three U.S. cities, analysts found that even after accounting for income, debt judgments were twice as high in Black neighborhoods as White. The authors were able to demonstrate that reasons for this went beyond current institutionalized racism in debt collection agencies and courts and were a consequence of the fact that “generations of discrimination have left Black families with grossly fewer resources to draw on when they come under financial pressure.” Due to historical and continuing systemic discrimination in housing and land use policies, people of color (and Black people in particular) are [much more likely to live in areas with higher concentrations of poverty](#), even when they are not poor. With less proximity to opportunity structures and social support networks that are equally resource poor, they are less able to access the material and economic resources needed for safety.

**Our mainstream service and safety systems are too often inaccessible, inhospitable, or outright discriminatory to survivors on the social margins.** For example, in a [survey by the National Latin@ Network and National Domestic Violence Hotline](#), 31% of Latina survivors who called the hotline reported problems accessing a range of services due to language barriers (from the absence of Spanish services, to limited/no interpreters, to no written resources in Spanish). In a [study of Muslim compared to non-Muslim immigrant women](#), Muslim immigrant women were more likely to report language access/translation as well as usefulness or appropriate response as barriers to calling the police. And in 2005, the [Center for Family Policy and Practice](#) held listening sessions with African American survivors and advocates who noted that many staff/representatives *within* domestic violence agencies “used the advantage of the power dynamic to pass judgment and deny relief [to African American survivors].”

**Survivors of color also face state violence that mirrors and reflects partner violence, compounding its harm.** The overpolicing and criminalization of people of color has led domestic and sexual violence survivors to be fearful of and hesitant to reach out to police—often choosing to protect their abuser, their communities, and themselves from police misconduct and violence. Overpolicing of communities of color has also resulted in [disparate impacts of dual and pro-arrest polices](#) on both them and [LGBT survivors](#). Some cities report [high rates of survivors being arrested](#) after domestic violence calls (over 20%) and the vast majority of those arrests are women of color (66% in New York City). For example, in her article, “Against Carceral Feminism,” Victoria Law shares one story: “In 2012, Marissa Alexander, a Black mother in Florida, was arrested after she fired a warning shot to prevent her husband from continuing to attack her. Her husband left the house and called the police. She was arrested and, although he had not been injured, prosecuted for aggravated assault.” This work supports Beth Richie’s seminal work, *Compelled to Crime* (1995), where she laid out the deep [connection between poverty, abuse, and incarceration of Black women](#) in interviews with 37 women at Rikers Island. Finally, immigrant survivors of violence (including Cambodian, Pakistani, Mexican, Haitian, and other immigrant communities of color) are facing unprecedented levels of police scrutiny and apprehension leading to increased detentions, and deportations, despite the fact that they may be eligible for protection orders, U-

Visas, or other types of relief. This has led to a [significant decline in reports of crime](#), generally, and of sexual and domestic violence crimes, in immigrant communities specifically.<sup>vi</sup>

### **Despite Real Data, People Fear Talking About Race and Racism.**

Many people are afraid to have conversations about race, racism, equity, and inclusion. For some, talking about race and racism can feel uncomfortable and risky. People are afraid of saying the wrong thing or being called racist. For those who want to move into action to address racism, talking about race and racism can be draining, frustrating, and risky. People are afraid that if they speak up about racism they will be silenced, further marginalized within their organizations, or labeled a troublemaker. But, we cannot allow fear to prevent us from addressing reality. Instead we can learn to “show up” in ways that support one another and address the dangers faced by survivors, colleagues, friends, family, and ourselves.

To address the social exclusion, unequal access to resources, disproportionate exposure to harm, and unfair discrimination experienced by people of color, we must “show up” with courage and humility. We must confront our fears and embrace nuance and complexity so we can have constructive conversations. “Showing up” for racial equity also requires focused learning about racism, colonialism, ethnocentrism, nativism, and colorism, and how historical and current racial and ethnic inequities are normalized and facilitated, consciously and unconsciously, with and without intent, at individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural levels within our society.

If we want to address racial inequity, we have to acknowledge it, learn about it, and talk about it so we can “do” more about it, together.

### **An Invitation to shake loose assumptions and enter this report mindfully.**

Whether you are new to conversations about race, racism, and all the “isms” or you have been having these kinds of conversations for decades;

Whether you are uncomfortable when race, ethnicity, racism or the “other” come up in a conversation or you are frustrated that some people are still so uncomfortable with the topic;

We invite you to take a deep breath. And then remember:

- *None of us has all the answers but each of us can pave the way to better outcomes if we listen and seek first to hear, understand and acknowledge the other.*
- *Being uncomfortable is okay. Pay attention to your discomfort when it arises and sit with it; allow it to be.*
- *Act to clarify your role in changing the status quo and what solutions are possible to address disparities.*

Wherever it is that you enter, we invite you to take another deep breath and then remember to take care of yourself. *Wading into this is hard. It can be traumatic or triggering.*

It's about being open to learn, and also about practicing care for self and others, so that we have the energy and reserves to more deeply engage in this work together.

### **The purpose of this report is to dialogue-back with the community that contributed to the *From Margins to Center Listening Sessions*.**

This report shares themes and issues from Listening Session conversations via text, graphics and illustrations in order to aid in self-reflection, challenge dominant narratives, support improved data collection and analysis, and to begin, continue, or advance conversations and work toward racial equity for domestic and sexual violence survivors and for all of us.

REEP held seven *From Margins to Center Listening Sessions* in September 2017. Up to ten people participated in each call. Three calls were made up of on-the-ground advocates who identify as people of color AND survivors. This reflects a deliberate decision to prioritize the experiences of those within the domestic and sexual violence advocacy community who have the most experience with racial and economic inequities. The other calls were made up of economic justice or project specialist staff from statewide domestic or sexual violence coalitions (1 call with people of color, 1 call with white/aspiring allies), and attorneys who worked in a range of contexts, including legal services, community based domestic violence organizations, and culturally specific legal programs (both attorney calls were racially mixed groups).



The voices you'll hear throughout this report are predominantly from advocates of color who also identify as survivors in order to carry on a dialogue that continues to center their experiences and amplify their insights.

## Choices we made about language.

Throughout this report, we use quotations from the Listening Session participants. Except for a few edits for clarity or length, the quotations are statements of Listening Session participants in their own words.

In the main text, we use a few terms that we intend to have more specific meanings (see the Working Definitions sidebar). Terms within Listening Session participant quotations may or may not align with the definitions offered below and that is okay. People's expression often holds rich, untapped meaning that, with dialogue and self-reflection, may resonate more deeply at a later point in time.

Note: Part of the work of advancing racial equity involves creating shared meaning and understanding others' positionality. As you are developing or refining an understanding of race, racism, oppression, equity, and inclusion, take the time to dialogue with your colleagues and develop a shared understanding of the terms and language you use.

## Why From Margins to Center?

Listening Session participants report that we must more authentically engage in both *inward and outward work* for racial equity, simultaneously. Only by building our systems so that they work for those most marginalized can we truly be survivor-centered.

Let us listen and see what we can do to embrace and advance equity at multiple intersections – including across ability, Native American and Alaska Native identity, race, ethnicity, language, class, gender, gender identity, immigration status, and LGBTQ status.

When we acknowledge the lived realities of people who are facing oppression, and center their perspectives, experiences, and truths, we help to ensure these issues are not left to resolve in the dark but instead are examined and addressed in the light.

## Working Definitions

**Racial Equity** is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares...[It includes] work to address root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them. ([Center for Assessment and Policy Development](#))

Our use of the term “**survivor of color**” derives from the terms “**women of color**” and “**people of color**,” both political terms that emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s out of specific historical contexts in the United States.

“The **political term ‘women of color’** surfaced in the violence against women movement in the late seventies to unify all women experiencing multiple layers of marginalization with race and ethnicity as a common issue.” ([Women of Color Network, Inc.](#)) Similarly, the **political term “people of color”** is used primarily in the United States and is intended to be inclusive. It refers to people who are of African, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, and other indigenous descent including Latinx people. It recognizes a shared history of oppression, struggle and resilience and a commitment to work collaboratively to build a better future.

We acknowledge, like our partners [Women of Color Network, Inc.](#) that “in recent years, the [terms have] been questioned by many for valid reasons related to personal identity and definition, and because the word ‘color’ is not the primary issue for many women with shared ethnicity and race.” For some, “people of color” and “women of color” are seen as referring only to Black and Latinx people. We are not using the terms in this way. Neither was not intended to replace a person's statement of their identity or to blur the differences in histories of oppression across groups.

We embrace the terms as terms of solidarity and use them intentionally to engage in a shared struggle for equity recognizing the complexities of oppression, inclusion, history, and culture.

For more terms and definitions related to racial inequity and racism, see <https://www.racialequitytools.org/home>.

<sup>i</sup> Source: The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS), 2010-2012 State Report ([link](#))

<sup>ii</sup> For more detailed statistics and description on the link between violence, poverty, and social inequality, see CSAJ's [Accounting for Economic Security Atlas: Mapping the Terrain](#)

<sup>iii</sup> While we report NISVS data here that 18% of Asian and Pacific Islander women report abuse, there is important critique of available research and data ([see here](#) p.39) as well as [substantial population-specific evidence](#) that closer to 40-60% of API women report domestic violence and vastly underreported due many issues discussed here.

<sup>iv</sup> Sources: NISVS Overview of 2010 Findings on Victimization by Sexual Orientation ([link](#)); Hass, G.S., Dutton, M.A., & Orloff, L. (2000). Lifetime prevalence of violence against latina immigrants: Legal and policy implications. *Domestic Violence: Global Responses*, pp93-113. ([link](#)); FORGE, 2012 Factsheet ([link](#)); Plummer, S.-B., & Findley, P. A. (2012). Women with disabilities' experience with physical and sexual abuse: review of the literature and implications for the field. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, 13(1), 15–29. ([link](#))

<sup>v</sup> Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2017 Annual Social and Economic Supplement. (Table POV01); Data for Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander and Native American populations are from: U.S. Census Bureau; 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Tables: B17001 (poverty), B20017 (income)).

<sup>vi</sup> See Resources on page 13 of this Report for additional references on realities reported here.

# 1. HOW WE TALK ABOUT RACIAL INEQUITY FACING SURVIVORS

Listening Session participants expressed a range of ways that they and their organizations talk about and act (or don't) to address racial inequity: Some participants, regardless of their own racial identities, did not see racial bias and inequity as a significant problems or have an understanding of what the terms mean. Others acknowledged concepts like white privilege and racial inequity in theory but expressed discomfort or got defensive when talking about how they show up in real life. Still others were eager to talk and do more about creating racial equity but struggled to start conversations and felt they lacked the tools and language to effect change. And some, with greater depth of experience and tools, offered useful guidance for how they or their organizations have effectively engaged issues of racial equity and ways we can do even better.

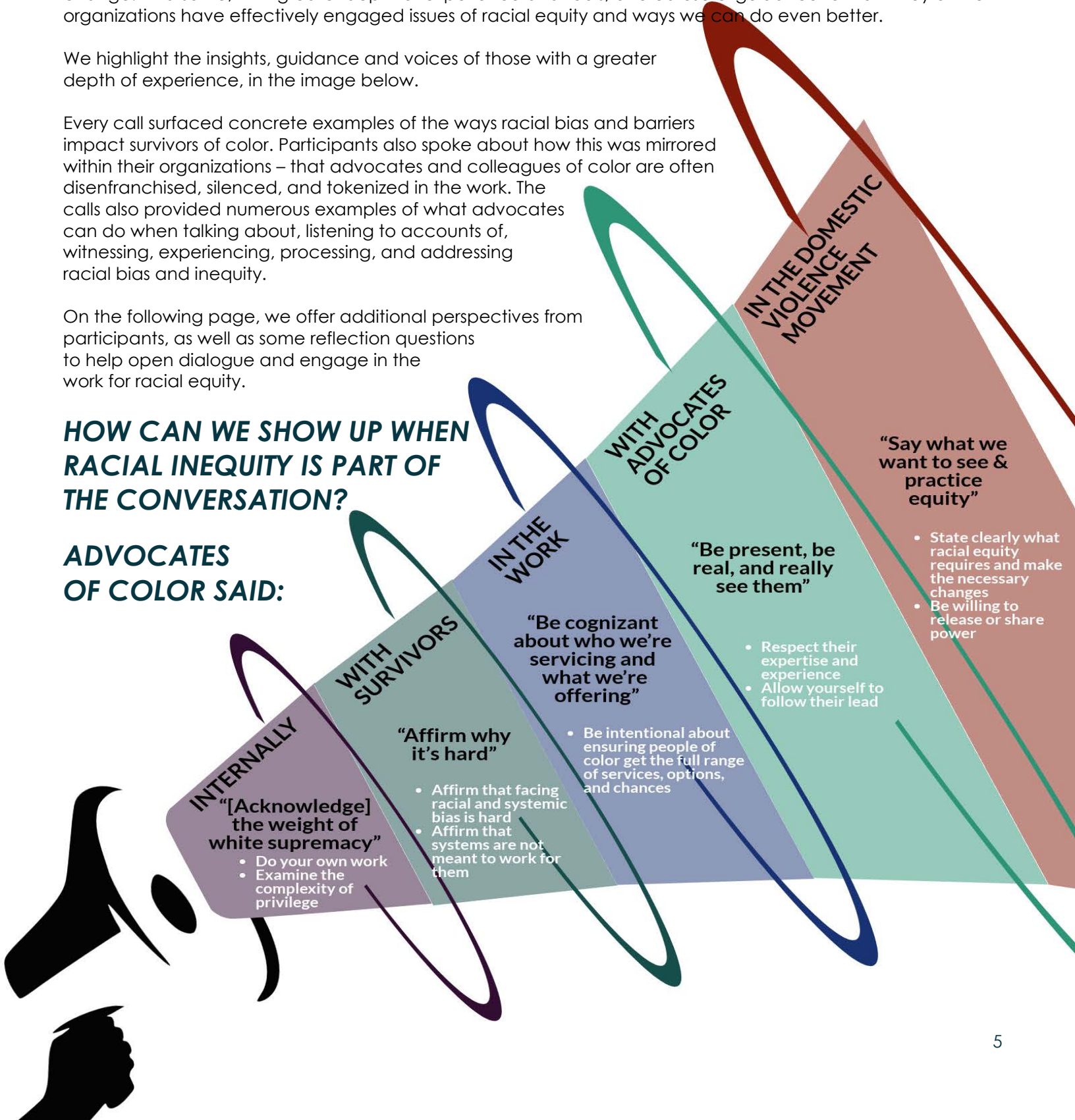
We highlight the insights, guidance and voices of those with a greater depth of experience, in the image below.

Every call surfaced concrete examples of the ways racial bias and barriers impact survivors of color. Participants also spoke about how this was mirrored within their organizations – that advocates and colleagues of color are often disenfranchised, silenced, and tokenized in the work. The calls also provided numerous examples of what advocates can do when talking about, listening to accounts of, witnessing, experiencing, processing, and addressing racial bias and inequity.

On the following page, we offer additional perspectives from participants, as well as some reflection questions to help open dialogue and engage in the work for racial equity.

## HOW CAN WE SHOW UP WHEN RACIAL INEQUITY IS PART OF THE CONVERSATION?

### ADVOCATES OF COLOR SAID:



## INTERNALLY...

"I've always known its presence, but I am really feeling the weight of white supremacy in many ways right now. I'm really struggling with being within a primarily white-led organization, working with sexual assault survivors and trying to contemplate how we fundamentally restructure our practice to center folks of color, queer folks of color, survivors of color." - **an attorney of color**

"I'm gay, male and Hispanic so even though I am part of a Hispanic community, I still have male privilege to check. In my community I have White privilege that I need to check. There are still things I have to learn around that because we all have isms that we have to check." - **a gay, male, immigrant advocate**

"I am a White person and it is sometimes very uncomfortable for me to talk about racial inequity because I don't feel like I really can...I see these things happening and I want to fix them and I want to address them but I don't know how...It's uncomfortable to me, I guess." - **a white attorney**

## WITH SURVIVORS...

"When I talk with survivors...I affirm how systems don't help in the way they should and the way that people need. So, for example...We have a lot of calls from people needing housing and getting legal support and all the intersections of race, mental health, economic stability come into play. We see how it comes full circle when they're talking about how hard it is. I have them focus on the fact that these are systems that were not designed with them in mind. And we are not shy about saying that." - **an advocate of color who also identifies as a survivor**

## IN THE WORK...

"Being an immigrant, I get upset about the mistreatment of survivors because people don't understand their culture. I feel we short change survivors because of these biases. It just blows my mind; Okay, if this person doesn't communicate you can't make them sit in a corner because you can't talk to them! We need a solution. This is not fair. Who are we actually servicing? We're serving white, middle aged, middle class, women. That's great; I'm glad they're getting services, but you know there's more." - **an immigrant advocate**

## WITH ADVOCATES OF COLOR...

"When I am [with advocates from member programs] I do my best to be present and be as real with them as they need to be or want to be. The last site visit I made, two of the advocates (both Black women, over 45 years old, so you know have been here for a while) are still not getting fully acknowledged or affirmed in their workplace at all. I see that work is predominately on their shoulders, their support is minimal, they're frustrated at so many different levels, and don't have space to make that known because their superiors are cis-White men and absolutely don't see them" - **a coalition staff of color**

## IN THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MOVEMENT...

"Just recently, most of our advocates expressed that they're having issues with how the police force respect them as women of color in the DV world, but they also [have similar issues] trying to get into leadership roles [within our organization]. Most of our directors of programs are White women, and most of the people we serve are African American women. Even when we go out as a coalition staff, the African American coalition staff are not presenters. It's still our Caucasian counterparts. So, it's hard for us as women of color to sit at the table and tell [survivors], 'oh it's gonna be ok.' when we're having the same oppression in our offices as well." - **a coalition staff of color**

"I work at coalitions and am the only woman of color. I hear a lot of vocab coming out of the movement to end violence. I see things, ideas, words, etc. used in Facebook feeds or language coming out of the Women's March. There is talk of shifting to equity models but it still rings true that individual women - power-holders - have not come to the point where they are ready to give it (power) up. They talk in larger spaces about action but they are not practicing it." - **a coalition staff of color**



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

FOR INDIVIDUALS, SMALL GROUPS & ORGANIZATIONS

- How have you practiced both self-examination and self-care when it comes to racism and racial bias in the work?
- What works well, what's hard, and what do you need?
- In what ways can you acknowledge the racial bias showing up in survivors' experience?
- How could you foster more conversations with survivors about opportunities and barriers they face?
- What successful strategies have you used to address the racial bias or barriers they face?
- What are your organization's policies, practices, and protocols to address racial disparities for survivors? (e.g. advocacy approaches, types and design of programs, prioritization of cases)
- Who is your organization partnering with on a regular basis to better understand community needs?
- What policies, practices, and protocols promote racial equity within your organization? (e.g. hiring, budgets, training, leadership and mentorship, etc.)
- As a person of color, what do you need to continue in the work?
- As a White person, what are some ways you can "be present, real, and see" colleagues of color?
- What policies and practices promote racial equity within the DV movement? (e.g. shared leadership models, inclusive agenda-setting, storytelling, and imagery, etc.) What do you still need?
- What would you like your organization, community, or state to look like or be doing in 1 year, 5 years, or 10 years?



## 2. THE CUMULATIVE HARM OF RACIAL BIAS

Participants from all Listening Sessions highlighted disturbing yet common ways that racial bias shows up for survivors and advocates of color. Many called for ways to measure and gather data or evidence of the harm consistently reported by survivors and advocates, harm resulting by virtue of their race, ethnicity, citizenship status, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, and/or ability. Some participants want new skills and tools to help identify, examine, and talk about disparities. Others asked for evidence that can expose trends, fuel advocacy efforts and connect survivors from different backgrounds with shared experiences.

Below is a set of narratives highlighting how racial bias permeates multiple aspects of survivors' lives. The cumulative weight of navigating racial bias – showing up at multiple levels – is borne by the survivors facing racial bias rather than interrupted by the systems they interact with on a daily basis.

What can we do about this? Data – whether in numbers or in stories – is one tool that can help fuel advocacy, identify new actions, and help us see through our own biases as we simultaneously identify and address the inequities imbedded within the systems survivors navigate. There are some simple ways that our own program data can help us recognize the biases and systemic barriers faced by low-income, immigrant, disabled, LGBTQ, Native, and survivors of color. These biases and barriers need not be intentional or even conscious. Whether intentional, historical or just unexamined, the cumulative and disproportionate harm to survivors of color, is real.

### How Racial Bias Shows Up For Survivors. Some examples...



#### ...within programs

"We still place far too many hoops in front of things like transitional housing, rapid re-housing, emergency shelter, or financial assistance for rent, utilities, or deposits. We've put all these conditions around it in many programs, so it's only the survivors who are 'working the steps of the program' that can make it...if you're a 'good' survivor, you get access."

#### ...in outside services & institutions

"I feel sometimes people just completely brush [immigrant survivors] off as not having a legitimate concern or legitimate issue. I had a client trying to express to the court that her husband was sexually assaulting their child, and she could not find the words to explain that. And the court just kept telling her that she has to give this man her daughter for his parenting time...all because they system was not equipped to fulfill her language needs."

#### ...in communities

"A disproportionate amount of folks from marginalized communities live in rural areas that lack quality and affordable public transportation, local job opportunities, affordable housing etc. And those white folks who do live in those areas are more likely to benefit from good 'ol boy networks and other privileges that people of color do not receive."

#### ...in policies

"After January, we began to notice larger scrutiny of immigrant survivors by the [public benefits] board in regard to legal status. It's always been challenging here, but a lot more intense now. We've also seen a significant decline in undocumented survivors reaching out for services. We're still trying to measure that...We're still seeing the impacts of redlining in housing and stuff like that, and although it's not in practice, it's hard. How do you measure it? How do you document it? How are you proving that it's happening in your community outside of staff anecdotal comments?"

"For me, racial bias shows up in different things at different levels. From staff, from people of color working at agencies, from clients, from community, and from policies.

One clear example...let's say an undocumented immigrant comes to a shelter and the shelter staff is not aware of his/her bias, that person can be denied shelter. And if they have access [to the shelter], they might be denied interpretation because they don't know that they have the right to interpretation. Even if they are provided interpretation, they might not be presented with all the opportunities or protections that VAWA has. So it has so many levels, so many layers."  
~ an economic specialist and advocate of color from a state coalition

Below we delve into two scenarios that came up during Listening Sessions, which present opportunities to better recognize where and when individual bias and systemic barriers show up and reinforce one another, how individual advocates/attorneys might perceive and respond to survivor behavior; and how we might adjust our programs and practices to maximize positive outcomes for all survivors. As you review the scenarios, ask yourself how you or your program can implement each of the considerations and strategies.

More details and an additional scenario can be found in Appendix A.

## STORIES & DATA TO ILLUMINATE RACIAL INEQUITY

"There was a survivor who was staying at the shelter who was already accepted into the transitional housing program.... She was a woman of color with one small child. But the staff at the shelter knew little to nothing about her actual circumstances...there was this constant stream of complaints about her because she was always breaking curfew. So, I was hearing stories about this person we need to exit because she kept breaking curfew."



### WHAT SHOWS UP

**Staff/Program Perspective:**  
"a woman of color [survivor] with one small child... constant stream of complaints ... always breaking curfew."

**Survivor Reality:**  
"[The transitional housing program staff] knew that she was breaking curfew because she was relying on a cousin to get off work at 10pm at night to give her some of his tips each day ... until she got started on her job. She was waiting on school to start [her job] because she needed the school as childcare. [Shelter staff were complaining] even though they never attempted to have a conversation."

**What Listening Session Participants Report:**  
Survivors of color are more likely than white survivors to receive caps on funding, be placed on payment plans, experience strict enforcement of shelter rules, and be exited from programs/shelter.

### WHAT MAY BE AT PLAY

**Staff Assumptions & Unconscious Bias:**  
Over-reliance on assumptions based on stereotypes or media images (e.g. angry Black woman stereotype, lazy, disrespectful) rather than inquiry to specific survivor.

**Staff Knowledge, Skills, Capacity:**  
Advocacy approach relies on service delivery rather than assessing survivor holistic needs. Staff lack resources and support to assess and address survivors' multitude of needs.

**Program Coordination:**  
Transitional housing and shelter staff not communicating or coordinating cases.

**Economic/social Reality:**  
Historical systemic discrimination, redlining, and segregation results in less wealth accumulated in families, networks, and communities of color, thus social networks or family unable to offer as much financial or material support to survivors of color.

**Existing Policies:**  
Resources to provide income streams to women facing violence are not a high priority.

### CONSIDERATIONS & STRATEGIES

**Data Collection:**  
Does your organization collect data on when and why people enter, leave, and are asked to leave from the program?

Does your organization collect socio-demographic so you can notice and analyze trends across populations?

How might your organization shift current data collection practices to better document scenarios like these and their underlying factors?

How can you partner with survivors, advocates, and organizations from marginalized communities to assess, interpret, and address scenarios like these?

**Program Policies:**  
Are there standard steps that must be taken before someone is exited from a program? Are they followed consistently?

What mechanisms could be put in place to share information across staff, programs, and partners?

Is staff educated on how assumptions, stereotypes and bias impact how we hear and interpret stories, data and take action? On how to avoid taking actions based on biases and stereotypes?

**Systems Advocacy:**  
Are staff engaged in systems advocacy and coalition building work to identify critical needs, expand affordable housing, or build local economic opportunities?

"In the immigrant population in our community there's typically a language barrier. Where they're having problems is in getting people to help them and to understand what they're trying to convey and where they need help...I had an [immigrant, non-English speaking] client who was trying for over a year to express to the court that her husband was sexually assaulting their child, and she could not find the words to explain that. And the court just kept telling her that she has to give this man her daughter for his parenting time."



### WHAT SHOWS UP

**Staff/Program Perspective:**  
"for over a year ... the court just kept telling her that she has to give this man her daughter for his parenting time."

**Survivor Reality:**  
"[The court] never requested a translator and focused only giving the husband equal custody time. She had to seek legal help on her own. Only then, a year later, was he convicted of sexual assault against this child as result of a jury trial...this was all because the system was not equipped to fulfill her language needs."

**What Listening Session Participants Report:**  
Non-English-speaking immigrant survivors less likely to have legal representation, cases take longer, and poorer case outcomes.

### WHAT MAY BE AT PLAY

**Staff Knowledge, Skills, Capacity:**  
Advocates lack capacity to monitor courts and engage litigants; lack knowledge, skills, time to consistently identify and report systemic court/language barriers.

**Program Coordination:**  
DV/SA organizations not communicating with or advocating for changes in courts/service systems.

**Systems factor:**  
Courts do not, or inconsistently, offer translators, language accommodation, or request representation; DV/SA organizations over-rely on individual advocates to handle systemic language barriers in courts.

**Economic/social Reality:**  
Immigrant survivors more likely to be handcuffed or detained after calling for help. Due to experiences like this and fears of policies targeting or excluding immigrant populations from basic rights, undocumented survivors less likely to reach out for help from formal services like courts.

**Existing Policies:**  
Resources for language access in courts not a high priority; Few resources and policies to provide information (in multiple languages) for pro se litigants.

### CONSIDERATIONS & STRATEGIES

**Data Collection:**  
Does your organization keep track of who gets offered and receives specific services, e.g. translation services, legal representation?

Does your organization track length of cases, and case outcomes?

**Program Policies:**  
Does your organization have a language access policy and effective strategies to provide access to translators?

Does your organization engage in community outreach to increase access to services or representation?

**Systems Advocacy:**  
In what ways does your organization build relationships with communities of color and with courts and other service?

What practices does your organization engage in to identify and address systemic barriers in courts and other service systems?

Does your organization use stories and data to educate courts and other agencies on the impact on survivors when services (e.g. translation, legal representation) are denied?



### 3. SHOWING UP IN THE WORK

How do you and your organization “show up” to address racial inequity for survivors and for staff of color?

“We need to do inward and outward work for equity,” said one Listening Session participant. While some participants shared steps their organizations have taken on the path toward racial equity, others hadn’t thought much about the connection between racial equity and issues in their organizations, some were frustrated or felt stuck in the status quo, and still others felt unsafe and oppressed in their organizations.

As another participant called these “stages of engagement” – or a continuum of ways that individuals and organizations engage in racial equity. In this section, we map four “stages of engagement,”\* as described by Listening Session participants, based on **Leadership & Organizational Policies** (the state of racial/gender equity within organizational structure and practices), **Staff of Color\*\*** (experiences of inclusion and mutual respect, as well as oppression), **White Staff\*\*** (beliefs & actions that reflect equity as well as bias), and **Programs** (the purpose, scope, and who is served by programs and services).

**\*Stages of Engagement:** While we present the “stages of engagement” below as four separate categories, it’s more of a spectrum. And the path towards equity is not a straight line. You may locate yourself and your

### HOW DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION ENGAGE IN RACIAL EQUITY?





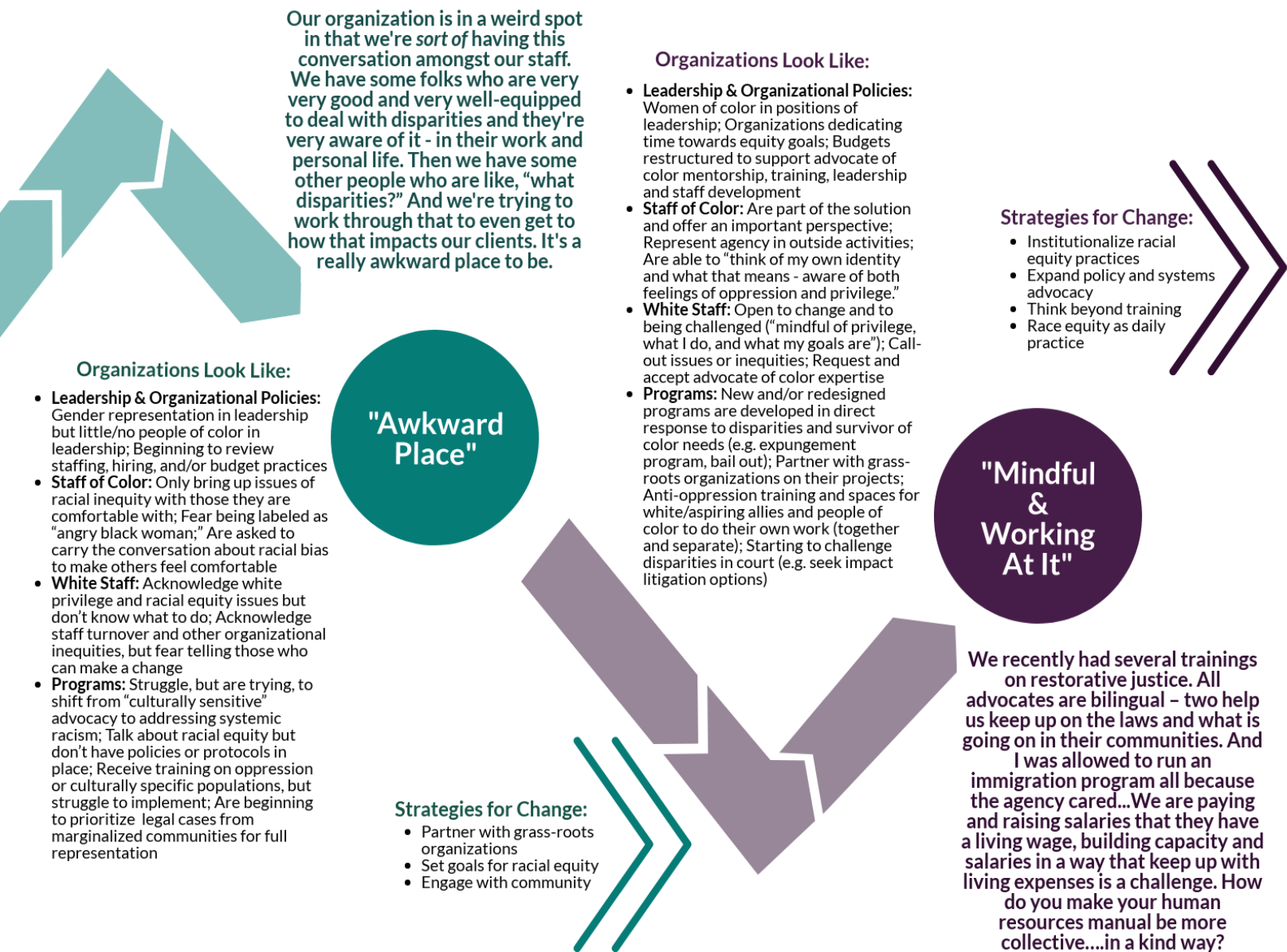
organization at different places on this spectrum for different reasons. And sometimes, we aren't as far along as we might think. Acknowledging that is an important part of engaging in racial equity.

**\*\*Staff of Color and White Staff:** The categories Staff of Color and White Staff include observations and insights from Listening Session participants of all races about the range of experiences of Staff of Color and White Staff at the various "stages of engagement." We recognize that neither Staff of Color nor White Staff are monoliths of behavior or belief. While there are undoubtedly individual White Advocates who have tried to interrupt oppression of others and individual Advocates of Color who have not given much thought to the link between racial inequity and violence, the categories reflect, for each "stage," the major themes in staff experiences as reported by Listening Session participants. We present examples in these two categories in the spirit of love and with the intent that they open opportunities for self- and organizational-enhancement.

As you read this section, ask yourself:

- *Where would you place yourself? Your organization? Does anything surprise you?*
- *Where would other people, organizations, staff, or partners place you or your organization?*
- *What strategies could move you or your organization toward greater racial equity? And what do you need to make that happen? (also see the next section for innovative examples of work recommended by Listening Session participants)*

See Appendix B for a full list of quotes/examples of organizational engagement.



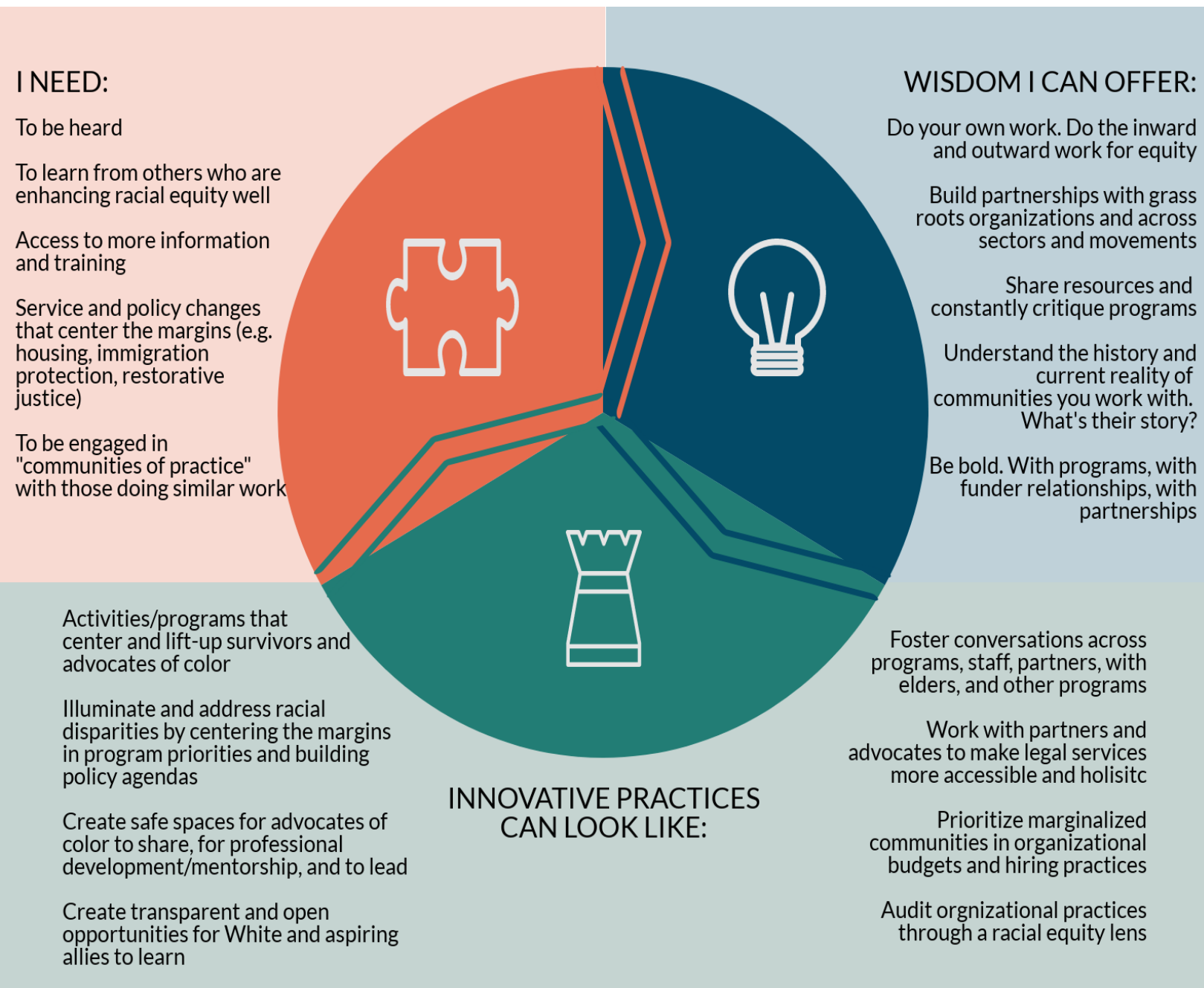
## 4. DOING OUR WORK: NEEDS, RECOMMENDATIONS, & INNOVATIONS FROM THE FIELD

In the last section, *Showing Up In The Work*, we asked where you would place yourself and your organization along “stages of engagement” in racial equity. This section offers strategies that each Listening Session affinity group identified – advocates of color who also identify as survivors, aspiring ally and attorneys of color sitting working in unique contexts, and coalition economic justice or policy staff who identify as aspiring allies or people of color. These strategies were directed at themselves – to continue learning and advancing racial equity – and well as for others in the field.

*What other strategies have you used that have worked well to address racial inequity? What other innovative ideas can you think of that are not listed here?*

The suggestions provided by Listening Session affinity groups are listed in full on the following page, but also summarized below. Listening Session participants drew connections between their **individual and organizational needs** to engage in racial equity as well as to heal from harm, shared their **wisdom and offered learning** to others in the work, and exchanged a range of inspiring and **innovative practices**.

See fuller descriptions of some innovative practices Listening Session participants shared in Appendix C.



## ADVOCACY & DV PROGRAM STRATEGIES

### White advocates: do your own work and create avenues for conversations

- They need to practice what they preach. Do the hard work.
- Do your homework understand what is going on with the community.
- Practice survivor-centered advocacy.
- Create avenues for conversations with survivors; acknowledge racial bias and difficulty of navigating systems.

### Mainstream programs: do inward and outward work for equity

- Provide trainings on innovative/non traditional approaches.
- Be open to connections between initiatives. And prioritize this work.
- More outreach, bilingual advocates, and community liaisons.
- Provide space to have difficult conversations.
- Pay equity (raise salaries).
- Review HR/operations manual: it should reflect equitable practice.

### Partner and promote the work of grass-roots organizations

- Allies could partner and promote the work these organizations [bail out, grass-roots, racial justice, etc.] are doing.
- Use outside, grass-roots organizations to audit your agency and its policies for equity.
- Prioritize work to build community rapport.
- Create survivor panels (must be SAFE to do so).

## COALITION STRATEGIES

### Engage with member programs and across the state in new ways

- Open up trainings to provide community scholarships for people who are not in the work but want to do more.
- Hold quarterly calls between DV advocates and faith leaders.
- Promote that safety planning needs to be intersectional and individual.
- Lift-up and share innovative, community-led practices or initiatives.

### Think beyond training

- Increase access to information through partnerships.
- Research/evaluation/data: "We are conducting a human impact assessment of what impact a recent discriminatory bill might have on marginalized communities."

### Prioritize racial equity within organizational practices

- Hiring practices and outreach: Create targets to get women of color in all leadership positions.
- Prioritize women of color within staffing budget, in leadership, as reps of coalition (outcome: more longevity of women of color advocates).

### Expand your policy agenda

- Create culturally specific spaces for conversation to inform policy and legislative priorities.
- Legislation: survivors' access to unemployment benefits if dismissed from or left a job due to abuse; use sick leave for dependents.
- Work at the state level against inequitable policies and bills being proposed and with the courts to fight against unjust laws.

## LEGAL SERVICES STRATEGIES

### Build Survivor Centered and Race Conscious legal practice

- Acknowledge structural and racial barriers: "I think sometimes I'm hesitant to say the words 'structural racialization' or 'racism' to my clients. And I think without a doubt that acknowledging that is affirming their experience, so I'm going to make an effort to not be afraid to say that to my clients."
- Prioritize legal cases with underserved populations as an "access to justice issue."
- Mobile advocacy: go to shelters, the community, partners.

### Create space for conversation and new ways to support the work

- Assess resources and time needed to do internal work.
- Hold anti-oppression day, or book club to educate and engage White aspiring ally attorneys. Find other safe spaces for attorneys/staff of color to talk, learn, and provide feedback.
- In addition to individual cases, take disparities into account regarding programming: expungement, challenging exclusion of LGBTQ individuals from restraining order protection in court, etc.

### Build partnerships and explore new models for justice

- Ask: "To what extent and who at every level of an organization is carving out space to allow that wisdom that is generated from partnerships to really infuse the organization?"
- Learn from and adapt restorative justice models used in culturally specific communities. For example, partner with a tribal elders to address criminalization of Native women.

## 5. RESOURCES DISCUSSED DURING LISTENING SESSIONS

This is not an exhaustive list of racial equity resources, but includes a few that were discussed during Listening Sessions that could help start, continue, or advance the dialogue and work toward racial equity in your organization and community.

- [Reports from the Field](#): An Economic Policy & Leadership Series, Women of Color Network, Inc.
  - [Focus on Tribal Sexual Assault](#) (2014)
  - [Focus on T- & U-Visas](#) (2014)
  - [Focus on Policy Advocacy Inclusion](#) (2014)
  - [Focus on Reentry Populations](#) (2014)
  - [Focus on Strengthening Services](#) (2014)
  - [Healing on Our Terms for Survivors in Communities of Color & Indigenous Communities](#) (2018)
  - [Defining Economic Justice in Communities of Color & Indigenous Communities](#) (2018)
  - [Trans Over-incarceration & Immigrant Detention as Part of Mass Incarceration](#) (2018)
- [Young Women of Color Advocates & Leadership Tool](#), Women of Color Network, Inc.
- Gaining Ground Reports, [Advocates of Color Report](#) & [Aspiring Allies Report](#), Women of Color Network, Inc.
- [A to Z Advocacy Model: Asians and Pacific Islanders Build an Inventory of Evidence-Informed Practices](#), from Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence
- Toolkits, from Casa de Esperanza, National Latin@ Network
  - [Building evidence \(evaluation tool\)](#)
  - [Court language access](#)
  - [Language access](#)
- [Identifying and Preventing Gender Bias in Law Enforcement Response to Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence](#), U.S. Department Of Justice
- Resources from the Center for Survivor Agency & Justice and REEP:
  - [Accounting for Economic Security Atlas: Mapping the Terrain](#)
  - [Building Partnerships to Enhance Consumer Rights for Domestic Violence Survivors: An Assessment and Resource Tool for Attorneys and Advocates](#)
  - [Building Partnerships for Economic Justice: A Report on CSAJ's Innovative Pilot Projects](#)
  - [Survivor Centered Economic Advocacy: A Multilevel Approach](#)
  - [Guidebook on Consumer & Economic Civil Legal Advocacy for Survivors](#)
  - [Archive of REEP webinars](#)
  - [REEP Monthly Digests: Archive](#)
- General Racial Equity resources: A Google-search will reveal a lot, but here's a primer...
  - [Race Forward](#), The Center for Racial Justice Innovation
  - [Racial Equity Tools](#), resource website by Center for Assessment and Policy Development, MP Associates, and World Trust Educational Services
  - Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race & Ethnicity, [Opportunity Mapping Initiative](#)
- Why Racial Equity? Why Now? Additional resources underscoring sections in the Introduction of this Report:
  - [Compelled to Crime: The Gender Entrapment of Battered, Black Women](#), (1994), Beth E. Richie
  - [Barriers to Service, Facts & Statistics](#), National Latin@ Network
  - [Trump's Deportation Surge is Harming Domestic Abuse Survivors](#), The Nation, July 7, 2017
  - [Fear of Deportation Spurs 4 Women to Drop Domestic Abuse Cases in Denver](#), NPR, March 21, 2017
  - [Fearing Deportation, Many Domestic Violence Victims are Steering Clear of Policy and Courts](#), Los Angeles Times, October 9, 2017
  - [Fearing Deportation, Asian Immigrants in America Obtain U.W. Citizenship](#), Los Angeles Times, December 21, 2017
  - [Deportations of Vietnamese, Cambodians Leave Bay Area Asian Immigrants Shaken](#), The Mercury News, November 10, 2017
  - [121 Pakistanis, 33 illegal Indian Immigrants Deported by US](#), Pakistan Today, March 1, 2018



# APPENDIX A

## STORIES & DATA TO ILLUMINATE RACIAL INEQUITY: THREE SCENARIOS

SEE SECTION 2: CUMULATIVE HARM OF RACIAL BIAS

**SCENARIO 1)** “There was a survivor who was staying at the shelter who was already accepted into the transitional housing program.... She was a woman of color with one small child. But the staff at the shelter knew little to nothing about her actual circumstances...there was this constant stream of complaints about her because she was always breaking curfew. So, I was hearing stories about this person we need to exit because she kept breaking curfew.”

<b>WHAT SHOWS UP</b>	<b>WHAT MAY BE AT PLAY</b>	<b>CONSIDERATIONS &amp; STRATEGIES</b>
<p><b>Staff/Program Perspective:</b> “a woman of color [survivor] with one small child... constant stream of complaints ... always breaking curfew”</p> <p><b>Survivor Reality:</b> “[The transitional housing program staff] knew that she was breaking curfew because she was relying on a cousin to get off work at 10pm at night to give her some of his tips each day ... until she got started on her job. She was waiting on school to start [her job] because she needed the school as childcare. [Shelter staff were complaining] even though they never attempted to have a conversation.”</p> <p><b>What Listening Session Participants Report:</b> Survivors of color are more likely than white survivors to receive caps on funding, be placed on payment plans, experience strict enforcement of shelter rules, and be exited from programs/shelter.</p>	<p><b>Staff Assumptions &amp; Unconscious Bias:</b> Over-reliance on assumptions based on past experiences, stereotypes or media images (e.g. angry, lazy, disrespectful Black woman stereotype) rather than inquiry to specific survivor.</p> <p><b>Staff Knowledge, Skills, Capacity:</b> Advocacy approach relies on service delivery rather than assessing survivor holistic needs. Staff lack resources and support to assess and address survivors’ multitude of needs.</p> <p><b>Program Coordination:</b> Transitional housing and shelter staff not communicating or coordinating cases.</p> <p><b>Economic/Social Reality:</b> Historical systemic discrimination, redlining, and segregation results in less wealth accumulated in families, networks, and communities of color. Social networks/family unable to offer as much financial or material support to survivors of color.</p> <p><b>Existing Policies:</b> Resources to provide income streams to women facing violence are not a high priority.</p>	<p><b>Data and Story Collection:</b> Does your organization collect data and stories about when and why people enter, leave, and are asked to leave from the program?  Does your organization collect socio-demographic data so you can notice and analyze trends across populations?  How can you partner with survivors, advocates, and organizations from marginalized communities to assess, interpret, and address scenarios like these?  How might your organization shift current data collection practices to better document scenarios like these and their underlying factors?</p> <p><b>Program Policies:</b> Are there standard steps that must be taken before someone is exited from a program? Are they followed consistently?  What mechanisms could be put in place to share information across staff, programs, and partners?  Is staff educated on the everyday challenges faced by survivors and how those may differ across race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.?  Is staff educated on how assumptions, stereotypes and bias impact how we hear and interpret stories, data and take action? On how to avoid taking actions based on biases and stereotypes?</p> <p><b>Systems Advocacy:</b> Is staff engaged in systems advocacy and coalition building work to identify critical needs, expand affordable housing, or build local economic opportunities?</p>

**SCENARIO 2)**

"In the immigrant population in our community there's typically a language barrier. Where they're having problems is in getting people to help them and to understand what they're trying to convey and where they need help...I had an [immigrant, non-English speaking] client who was trying for over a year to express to the court that her husband was sexually assaulting their child, and she could not find the words to explain that. And the court just kept telling her that she has to give this man her daughter for his parenting time."

<b>WHAT SHOWS UP</b>	<b>WHAT MAY BE AT PLAY</b>	<b>CONSIDERATIONS &amp; STRATEGIES</b>
<p><b>Staff/Program Perspective:</b> Unaware of survivor. Unaware of the challenges non-English speaking survivors face when trying to report domestic violence and sexual assault.</p> <p><b>Survivor Reality:</b> "[The court] never requested a translator and focused only giving the husband equal custody time. She had to seek legal help on her own. Only then, a year later, was he convicted of sexual assault against this child as result of a jury trial...this was all because the system was not equipped to fulfill her language needs."</p> <p><b>What Listening Session Participants Report:</b> Non-English-speaking immigrant survivors less likely to have legal representation, cases take longer, and poorer case outcomes. Too often, when faced with the systemic problem of translator scarcity, non-English speaking survivors are ignored or left in waiting rooms.</p>	<p><b>Staff Knowledge, Skills, Capacity:</b> Advocates lack capacity to monitor courts and engage litigants; lack knowledge, skills, time to consistently identify and report systemic court/language barriers.</p> <p><b>Program Coordination:</b> DV/SA organizations not prioritizing communicating with or advocating for changes in courts/service systems.</p> <p><b>Systems Factor:</b> Courts do not, or inconsistently, offer translators, language accommodation, or request representation; DV/SA organizations over-rely on individual advocates to handle systemic language barriers in courts.</p> <p><b>Economic/Social Reality:</b> Immigrant survivors more likely to be handcuffed or detained after calling for help. Due to policies and practices targeting immigrant populations, immigrant survivors less likely to reach out for help from formal services like courts.</p> <p><b>Existing Policies</b> Resources for language access in courts not a high priority; Few resources and policies to provide information (in multiple languages) for pro se litigants.</p>	<p><b>Data Collection:</b> Does your organization keep track of who gets offered and receives specific services, e.g. translation services, legal representation?  Does your organization track length of cases and case outcomes?</p> <p><b>Program Policies:</b> Does your organization have a language access policy and effective strategies to provide access to translators?  Does your organization engage in community outreach to increase access to services/representation?</p> <p><b>Systems Advocacy:</b> In what ways does your organization build relationships with communities of color and with courts and other service? In what ways have you successfully collaborated with each of them to effect change benefiting survivors of color?  What practices does your organization engage in to identify and address systemic barriers in courts and other service systems?  Does your organization use stories and data to educate courts and other agencies on the impact on survivors when services (e.g. translation, legal representation) are denied?</p>



### SCENARIO 3)

We have three programs: counseling, legal and advocacy. I'm in the legal program, where the majority population we serve is middle-aged, white women who are educated. In advocacy programs, because advocates go to all the hospital call outs, they see a wider, more diverse range of people. But because of transportation issues, most people who aren't white, middle aged, educated women don't necessarily have the ability to follow through. As a result, we don't actually get a lot of those people into legal services.

<b>WHAT SHOWS UP</b>	<b>WHAT MAY BE AT PLAY</b>	<b>CONSIDERATIONS &amp; STRATEGIES</b>
<p><b>Staff/Program Perspective:</b> “advocates go to all the hospital call outs, they see a wider, more diverse range of people. But because of transportation issues, most people who aren't white, middle aged, educated women don't necessarily have the ability to follow through.”</p> <p><b>Survivor Reality:</b> “We still have geographic segregation where you have many people who are African American living in one section of the city, and immigrants and people who speak Spanish in another. And there are a lot of issues around not only transportation, but also economic opportunities...” Advocates who do “see a more diverse range of people” not offering or linking to legal services. Legal services not engaged in or doing outreach into all communities, even if needs are known.</p> <p><b>What Listening Session Participants Report:</b> Programs are located in places outside communities of color or where communities of color can't reach and do less outreach/engagement into these communities, thus despite a community's makeup, there are more (or only) white survivors receiving legal services or certain types of services than survivors of color.</p>	<p><b>Staff Assumptions &amp; Unconscious Bias:</b> Rely on beliefs that survivors or color or immigrant survivors will “follow through” or return to services if they really need them.</p> <p><b>Staff Knowledge, Skills, Capacity:</b> Staff unaware or lack time/capacity to learn about innovative advocacy methods; Staff aware of economic conditions of certain communities, but lack skills or capacity to make programmatic changes to increase survivor access to legal services (or full range of advocacy).</p> <p><b>Program Coordination</b> Legal services not communicating or coordinating cases with advocates; not linked to or coordinating with outside partners.</p> <p><b>Systems Factor:</b> “Also the court system doesn't seem to have any sympathy for people that have to take off of work. People aren't getting paid, have to take off work for these numerous court appearance, childcare issues...you could lose your job. And then they say you can't have any contact with your abuser when they rely upon them for childcare so they can work. It isn't realistic.”</p> <p><b>Economic/Social Reality:</b> “A lot of reinvestment opportunities are no longer downtown, where all the public transportation runs to, but in the suburbs where there's no good public transportation...”</p> <p><b>Existing Policies:</b> Paid leave, minimum wage, workplace protections, transportation/infrastructure funding.</p>	<p><b>Data Collection:</b> Does your organization collect socio-demographic for people seeking, receiving, leaving and completing services?  Does your organization collect data on what kinds of transportation people use to access your programs?  Does your program collect data on barriers to seeking services or staying in the program?  What additional investment of resources might be necessary to increase the organization's success rate in reaching and serving survivors who are people of color immigrant, disabled, non-English speaking or LGBTQ?</p> <p><b>Program Policies:</b> Do all programs/departments in your organization have a community outreach/engagement plan?  What practices does your organization utilize to audit program set-up, community-reach, and accessibility?  Are your programs aware of innovative advocacy (legal and non-legal) approaches? (e.g. mobile or virtual service options, sending lawyers out with advocates)  Is staff offered regular training opportunities on key issues? Foundational and innovative advocacy approaches? Cultural responsiveness?</p> <p><b>Systems Advocacy:</b> What practices does your organization engage in to identify and address community and/or structural needs?</p>

## APPENDIX B

# QUOTES & EXAMPLES OF ORGANIZATIONAL ENGAGEMENT\*

SEE SECTION 3: SHOWING UP IN THE WORK

\*all examples are direct quotes from participants.

### DISCOMFORT & PUSHBACK

We run into some brick walls where a lot of our programs just wanna focus a lot on perpetrator violence. Not really giving a lot of thought to racism or racial violence - and all those ways can be their own kind of oppression. We get back to "treat all people equally." And that's where we run into a wall.

You notice how people of color have to do improvised advocacy for themselves. I see them navigating life not having access to resources. I notice who comes in for services and who doesn't because the word gets out that we have Spanish speaking staff and it also spreads the other way "they don't speak Korean don't go there.

There is a racial norm about how advocates of color should behave. There are white women here that are very introverted as well but that is fine because "that is the way they are." We are expected to do our work in a performative way.

There no understanding that people show up as full people. They don't get that if we just addressed that and creating space where it was welcome and ok to talk about....such a disconnect. It is violent to not talk about race in an antiviolence agency.

Self-care as an organizational value is something we say but it is not encouraged and the space is not made for it. People of color burn out really quick. It is not sustainable for employees or the organization.

### JUST THE NORM

What we are seeing [here] is a greater trend that is moving away from placing value on advocates of color who are also survivors especially black women –no one here knows I'm a survivor. We are hushed up and it feels like it is coming from this place of "you are bringing your stuff here." I don't know what it is but I know it is a trend.

So we've had lots of trainings on immigrants, on LGBTQ issues, but I think in terms of racial and ethnic issues for whatever reason that's not acknowledged that we need training on that. That there's an issue here not only within our community but there are issues among our staff and within our organization as well.

There have people on staff and people who speak language so when folks come in the door they see familiar faces. But aside from that, we are giving people crumbs...

I am an African American advocate in a majority White area. I think a lot of the reason they do not talk about bias is because we get used to it. So, it is a norm and you look over it...I mean I work with all types of people and it is just the norm therefore you don't talk about the bias or notice it really.

The DV movement has been very white women centered and still is. I think our organization is.. we have the intention. There are people that want to be engaged but because of the burnout and the pace of the work, this is looked at something additional. We don't have time to talk about these things, it's niche, it's framed as a personal thing because we are women of color.

It is understood that systemic oppression affects our clients so much. What's interesting about being on the direct services part of an anti-violence organization is that we are always on a scarcity mindset. There is never enough resources, never enough time and never enough people to help and there is always an influx of new survivors coming for help with complex needs. So, instead of talking about prevention and systemic ways to handle these situations we do Band-Aids. It is like, "What can we do right now? Can we give them a gift card?" And even when resources exist it's like can we send them to the job center and I'm like, "has anyone even

been to the job center? Do they have competent people who know about racial justice?" Probably not. So, because we're so inundated with survivor needs I feel like our conversations like this stop.

### **AWKWARD PLACE**

I think we, as women of color, limit our voice because I don't want to be the angry black women on the job or person on the job who always has something to say. Every conversation doesn't have to be comfortable. And why do I have to be uncomfortable in order to make someone else comfortable?

With some folks you have to start with a small spoon and introduce little topics and put the ideas on the table...not to start arguments but to make sure the awareness is raised. It depends on what kind of an ally the person is.

Our problem is that finding people that are willing to have conversations about the issues is difficult. There are no policies in place to support this.

People are not mentioning racial bias because it is such a sensitive topic. I address it with some I feel comfortable with and who can possibly help me address it with the community as a whole.

Our organization is in a weird spot in that we're sort of having this conversation amongst our staff. We have some folks who are very, very good and very well-equipped to deal with disparities and they're very aware of it and their work and personal life they're addressing as many issues as they can. Then we have some other people who are like, what disparities? And we're trying to work through that to even get to how that impacts our clients. It's a really awkward place to be.

### **MINDFUL, ENGAGED & LEARNING**

I think that when we hear about racial inequity, we're thinking about it very much in a structural and historical context. And we're engaging pretty directly. [There was] a Confederate rally this weekend in our city and we opened our doors to the counter protesters...as a sort of a safe haven in case folks needed a safe spot.

[Aspiring allies and mainstream orgs need to] do their own work at the starting point and ongoing, cause you don't ever finish. Examine what you are doing to prop up or examine racism. Be willing to change. To continually change your habits and your thoughts. And to sit with people on their stuff. Sometimes I'm gonna screw up or others are, and I need to get used to hearing that instead of being defensive or dismissive.

Just the idea of intersectionality and oppression and privilege have been really important to me. Just trying to think of my own identity and what that means. Being aware of both my feelings of oppression and privilege, and what that means, and who I'm serving, and working with the communities. So what does that mean with my own identity of oppression and privilege? Just being mindful of how I feel about that. I'm trying to think through how I say things, why I'm saying it, and what my goals are.

Our organization definitely has named some of these biases and talked about ways that we've heard it coming through with survivors or other DV service providers. I think that like a lot of people in orgs, we can often not get past the naming phase into figuring out what exact ways can we make a difference in changing some of these policies or barriers.

In addition to our work of trying to improve practices of member programs, we're intentionally trying to support the leadership and sustainability of community based DV orgs that are culturally specific. [In our state], we have a number of DV orgs that are founded and led by women of color, or individuals from other marginalized communities. We feel it's important to not just try to "fix and improve" our mainstream, federally funded shelter programs, but we also want these community based, grass roots programs to be successful.

Things that we have done over the years are kind of subtle changes as well as things that are more direct. Budgetarily we made sure we were creating the ability for women of color on our staff attend trainings that they were interested in, and prioritizing that more than other staff. We also identified that within our organization, we had a structure and habit of only a few people in leadership positions were the ones representing our organization at statewide meetings or meetings with other stakeholders. So we made a decision that all levels of staff served on various committees and workgroups.

# APPENDIX C:

## PARTICIPANT DESCRIPTIONS OF INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

SEE SECTION 4: DOING THE WORK

### ACTIVITIES TO CENTER & LIFT-UP SURVIVORS AND ADVOCATES OF COLOR

**Community Networking for Employment:** “This fireball of an advocate that’s been going to community forums. She has had 20 survivors hired this month through community networking...documented or not documented, she vouches for them that they’ve been coming through my program.”

**Anti-Oppression Day (safe learning spaces for white and staff of color):** “Every month [we organized] an anti-oppression day. We read books on hyper-incarceration, like *The New Jim Crow*, then there’d be a discussion on it. We watched films and read articles and had discussions...And during the time folks of color were exempt, they didn’t have to participate if they didn’t want to but could if they wanted to because our ED, who was white, was very cognizant that this was something that white people needed to do.”

**Bringing Language & Asking New Questions:** “What I’m bringing with me is my interest and commitment to economic freedom – and a broader economic power movement for black folks, for people of African descent, for anyone that’s ever been a victim of white supremacy, and all the dispossessions that happen because of that...with hopes that I can provide some language or direction with building out our economic justice work that is beyond the financial empowerment, self-sufficiency – a very limiting, narrowing model.”

**Addressing Disparate Impact:** “In recognizing the differential impact of the criminal justice system on people of color, we recently have started talking about launching an expungement program to reach out to survivors who have been criminal justice-involved. Something else we’ve been trying to do...North Carolina and Louisiana are only two states that don’t have equal protection for same sex survivors in offering protection for restraining orders...so we’ve been actively trying to seek a plaintiff so that we would have standing to challenge that in the courts.”

**Re-Examine Programs based on Survivor of Color Needs & Experiences:** “We need more options for divesting from criminal justice system and issues related to incarceration...we know who is affected more by that (incarceration), but it is a huge funding source for many of our agencies and of course many communities are going to have trepidation. When you think about survivors being criminalized, stand your ground laws not being enforced to support survivors etc.”

### CONVERSATIONS & BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

**Community Engagement:** “We are trying to learn new strategies. We are trying to do more community outreach versus waiting on them to come to us. We have a bilingual advocate and an underserved population advocate who will reach out to African American and LGBTQ community.”

**DV & Faith Conversations:** “Quarterly calls between DV advocates and faith leaders. The purpose is to bridge the two. It is challenging but it is happening. We have been doing these calls for year or so. It has been good for the community.”

#### **Learning from Native Communities and Elders:**

“A Native American DV program is in year two of implementing...a restorative justice model that was based in accountability with the tribal court, their circle of leaders, and trying to get the local police out of their business, more or less. So, that is one thing that was innovative to mainstream white people - not innovative to them! (They’ve been doing creative work and figuring out how to get around systems for a long time. But that’s something we’re embracing and trying to figure out if that’s something that can be modified to support other communities of color.”

**Infusing Wisdom into Legal Practice:** “We have a partnership with an organization that works with queer youth of color. So the idea is for our organization to be thinking about the ways in which we can provide civil legal services to youth, youth of color, queer youth of color. You know, thinking about everything from language, to what it means for you to have lawyers, what that relationship looks like, to what it would be like for this partner org client base coming into our office, where it’s located, what it looks like, everything. There’s so many opportunities for rich learning there.”

## OPERATIONS

**Prioritize marginalized communities in state budgets and building policy agenda:** “So one of the first things that our Executive Director worked on was creating a culturally specific space in our state funding for DV/SA programs that identify with either the LGBTQ community or Asian/Pacific Islander community...They have become a very important voice in directing policy, helping us to make legislative priorities based on what their communities are experiencing and what their feedback is to the state coalition.”

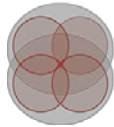
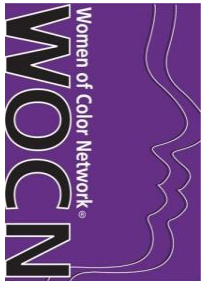
**Audit Organizational Practices with Partners:** “Our org is actually contracting with a nonprofit - they're grass-roots formed groups that will act as a consultant to do an audit of our org and our policies to see where are the place that...we are re-enacting barriers or missing opportunities to practice in a more equitable way.”

**Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention:** “Budgetarily, we made sure we were creating the ability for women of color on our staff attend trainings that they were interested in, and prioritizing that more than other staff. We also...we made a decision that all levels of staff would serve on various committees and workgroups so they could have a better understanding of who the players were, things going on, the issues, and then to also share their perspective and voice. That was a more informal leadership opportunity by being able to represent us outside of our office. We changed and evaluated our hiring and recruiting practices so that we're more successful at being able to recruit and hire women of color into all levels of our organization. It has led to more longevity of women of color. And in some instances them being promoted into leadership positions.”



## CENTER FOR SURVIVOR AGENCY & JUSTICE

THE RACIAL & ECONOMIC EQUITY FOR SURVIVORS PROJECT IS A  
NATIONAL PROJECT IN COLLABORATION WITH:



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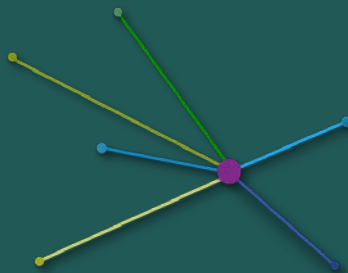
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FAMILY VIOLENCE  
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SOUTHWEST CENTER  
FOR LAW AND POLICY

& race equity partners, Camille Holmes and Bill Kennedy



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