WOMEN OF COLOR LEADERSHIP:

A Look at the Experiences of Women of Color Executives in the Anti-Violence Against Women's Movement

December 2011; released June 2013

Women of Color Network

A Project of the National Resource Center
On Domestic Violence

Ms. Foundation for Women
Building women's collective power to ignite change

Acknowledgments

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Executive Summary

Violence against women is pervasive in today's society, affecting women across all ethnic, class and age groups. Statistics reveal that:

- Nearly one in four women in the United States reports experiencing violence by a current or former spouse or boyfriend at some point in her life.[1]
- There were 248,300 rapes/sexual assaults in the United States in 2007, more than 500 per day, up from 190,600 in 2005.[2]

Women of Color have worked in and been an integral part of the anti-violence against women movement since its inception, and have participated in the building of culturally and linguistically specific programming for victim/survivors.

Throughout the years, many Women of Color have reported feeling silenced, excluded, stereotyped and marginalized within their anti-violence organizations. Women of Color experience these as barriers to their professional ascension. With the exception of a previous 2007 National Women of Color survey conducted by the Women of Color Network, very little research has been conducted on this subject. The WOCN sought and received support from the Ms. Foundation to conduct a 2010 nation-wide survey on the experiences of WOC executives in the domestic violence and sexual assault movements.

WOCN recognizes that not every woman of color has experienced similar marginalization with the movement, and many have both learned from and have inspired the movement toward change and success. However, we cannot discount that there are real issues and patterns to that should be addressed and this research project has allowed us to further explore these issues.

Key Findings

- 93.8% (15/16) of African-American respondents, 72.7% (8/11) of Latina respondents, and 87.5% of Asian American /Asian Pacific Islander, South East Asian/Indian, Native American /Indigenous, Middle Eastern/Arab American, respondents reported stereotyping in the workplace that they perceived as ethnic/racially related.

- 81% of the white respondents stated that they have identified situations in which they perceive to be ethnic/race-related bias against Women of Color in their workplaces. Of these respondents, 72.7% identified that white women are generally treated more favorably with regards to opportunities, expectations, or other experiences than their Women of Color counterparts.

Key Recommendations:

Accountability
WOCN can look toward creating and informing the field of accountability measures to be adopted and implemented by mainstream organizations for reducing bias and promoting WOC leadership. Areas of accountability can be in attitudinal, structural, and ideological change. In addition to codifying language, suggested incentives include accountability in funding and performance reviews.

Training/Research
WOCN can look toward creating and informing the field of organizational models and structures that are successful at reducing or minimizing institutional barriers to WOC advancement. Training on these models could focus on attitudinal, structural, and ideological change. Further, additional research is desperately needed in this field as it relates to the demographics of the field and what positions they hold.

Leadership

WOCN can look toward developing the collective capacity of white allies across the country to advance this work. Leadership should be skilled in working with mainstream/other white leadership in revolutionizing how anti-violence against women's work can be more rooted in a larger social justice framework. Leadership development should look to impact attitudes, structures, and ideology.

Foreword

By Tonya Lovelace, WOCN Project Manager

Background

The Women of Color Network was founded in 1997 with the mission of enhancing and promoting the leadership of women of color advocates[i] in the United States, Territories and Tribal Nations and supporting their efforts to eliminate violence against women and children.

Over the past 14 years, WOCN has collected countless stories through national training, meetings and forums, and has received call after call from women of color who have either lost their jobs or are being pushed out of their programs. The shared experiences of these women of color led WOCN to conduct a national survey in January and February 2007. The primary goal was to determine the scope of the problem and to get a sense of their experiences as women of color in their programs. 232 women of color completed the survey. However, while compiling that data another more immediate event took precedence, resulting in a delay in the analysis and completion of the final report.

On April 13, 2007, the WOCN office received several phone calls and emails from members of the WOCN Advisory Group, Mentor Group and general membership asking that WOCN staff take action in response to the termination of a woman of color at a state coalition by upper management, and another woman of color, her direct supervisor, who chose to resign on the spot in a show of support. The number of calls in support of these women, coupled with the severity of other concurrent workplace calls, lead WOCN staff to immediately release the national correspondence entitled: *A Call to Response: Rally to Support the Endangered Woman of Color Advocate.*

That correspondence declared that the pushing of women of color out of their programs, and potentially the movement as a whole, has happened to "one too many" women of color. It stated that WOCN will no longer address the endangerment of the woman of color advocate in isolation - women of color and those aspiring to be allies must work together to uncover the problem and to seek solutions. The correspondence asked advocates to answer four questions related to what they are seeing regarding the endangerment of women of color advocates in their programs, their feelings about this issue, how they would define the problem, and any solutions that they would like to offer. The response was overwhelming and lead to the release of a 28-page document on April 20, 2008 entitled: *Special Edition: WOCN Update #85 – National Response to the Call from WOCN: Collective Voices on the Endangered Woman of Color Advocate.* The Special Edition Update spawned a rigorous national dialogue addressing the experiences of women of color in programs and in the movement in ways that had never occurred before.

WOCN was then faced with the question, "where do we go from here"? This very question sparked the first Call to Action teleconference implemented through the vehicle "WOCN Training Without Walls" teleconference series. The goal was to provide a national forum for women of color and allies alike to talk about women of color as a valued but endangered group within the movement, and to not only examine the problem of endangerment but to move forward with action. The initial teleconference led to a series of calls – one set of Call to Action calls with women of color only, and another set of Call to Action Calls with women of color and allies together. Out of those calls came two documents released in July 2008 entitled:

National Women of Color Statement: Call to Action 2008 by Women of Color Advocates and Activists and *National Ally Statement: Call to Action Statement 2008 by Those Aspiring to Be Allies to Women of Color Advocates and Activists.* These two National Statements represent over 25 national calls and the collective voices of over 700 women of color, male and mainstream advocates which help to frame the problem and provide solid recommendations for individual, systems and policy change within the anti-violence against women movement.

The National Women of Color Statement included the voices of 275 women of African, Native, Latin and Asian descent. They identified several factors that affect the experiences of victims/survivors seeking services from mainstream programs and affect the experiences of staff seeking to be more responsive to their needs:

1. **Cultural Ignorance:** Many mainstream advocates and programs have and maintain limited knowledge about communities of color and or language access issues. This creates an environment of discomfort and even greater marginalization for those who receive the services, and represent barriers to others who might otherwise access the services; e.g., still using antiquated or offensive terms when discussing communities of color, or refusing to diversify the meal selection to accommodate those who do not eat pork or other foods due to cultural or religious reasons.

2. **Discrimination in Intake/Screening:** There are still programs around the country that request to have women come in person before they will admit them into their services. These women may be turned away or sent to another location that is consequently located in an urban or inner city location. The perception for many of these women is that they are being turned away based on their race or ethnicity, language or immigration status.

3. **Immigration/Language Barriers:** Some women are still turned away for either being undocumented or even perceived as undocumented. Non- English speaking or Limited English Proficient women are often turned away or treated as a "nuisance" due to a need for translation services, longer stays in shelter, intensive advocacy and case management and support due to their complex legal needs and ineligibility for some public benefits.

4. **Lack of Responsibility:** White/Caucasian advocates are often "let off the hook" when it comes to addressing issues of bias within systems when it comes to survivors from communities of color. They may either claim they "never noticed" the problem or may downplay the issues that survivors bring up. Survivors of color often reach out to an advocate of color to express their concern. Supervisors may make it a point to then pass on survivors of color to advocates of color without requiring white/Caucasian advocates to increase their knowledge on issues of racism or other 'isms, and may make this an agency-wide practice in which advocates of color are expected to serve "their own" and white/Caucasian advocates not sharing responsibility in serving ALL survivors.

Two additional threads of calls came out of this, one with young women of color, who have published a *Young Women of Color Mentoring Tool* and have established a steering group entitled the Young Women of Color Task Force; and intergenerational calls with women of color across the lifespan.

The Call to Action teleconferences continued with the intention of providing an organizing forum for women of color and for aspiring allies and to eventually make way for a national Call to Action conference.

On May 10-14, 2010 at the Westin Canal Place in New Orleans, Louisiana, WOCN hosted the **1st National Call to Action Institute and Conference: Supporting Women of Color Advocates and Activists Working to End Violence Against Women and Families**. WOCN received seed funding from the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Special Programs, Department of Justice to make this dream a reality, demonstrating the power of collective voice and action. Additional funders included Family Violence Prevention and Services Office - Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health, National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and Pittsburgh Foundation. Partners included A Call to Men, People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, and California Coalition Against Sexual Assault – Prevention Institute.

Close to 400 participated in three institutes occurring simultaneously on May 11-12: a Women of Color Institute, Men's Institute (in partnership with A Call to Men), and Mainstream Women Allies Institute. This was followed by a two-day national conference on May 13-14, bringing all three groups together. Topics such as *leadership development, anti-oppression, economic empowerment, ally support, culturally specific approaches and cross-cultural service delivery, and self-care* were featured throughout the event, with a special Undoing Racism Track of workshops implemented by the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond.

Specific attention was given to local efforts that are being made in Louisiana post-Katrina and the results at the time from the Violence Policy Center indicating that Louisiana ranks first in the nation in the rate of women killed by men. Out of 57 female homicide victims, 31 were African American, 25 were white, and 1 was Asian or Pacific Islander; 90% were murdered by someone they knew.

The Problem Persists

While these WOCN events helped raise national awareness of the endangerment of women of color advocates, there was still a visible problem playing out in state and national programs. Women of color in high-level positions were continuing to be terminated or forced to resign in state coalitions and key national positions. This pattern was becoming more apparent to women of color and aspiring allies across the country. There was a greater sense of fear for women of color advocates causing them to ponder, "if they are not safe then none of us are".

In 2001, WOCN conducted leadership training for women of color advocates and activists to address the fact that there were few women of color in leadership roles. There was a lack of mentoring for women of color to obtain these roles.

Since that time, there have been a fair number of women of color who have moved into high-profile executive positions within national and state programs, some of whom went through WOCN Leadership Trainings.

Through observation as well as through personal testimony from some of these individuals, a number of these women of color executives have been removed from their positions or have had to leave under duress through termination, forced resignation, quitting on the spot, or planned resignation because of hostile working conditions.

The high visibility of these roles coupled with the issue of there being few women of color who even make it into these positions has served to create a "fish-bowl effect" where those within in the proverbial bowl are center stage and those who watch are also impacted; especially those who hope to move into such roles but now have to question their chances of success. Those who we have spoken with on national, state and local levels alike face the difficulty of continuing anti-violence against women work in programs within their region, and sometimes in other regions. They suspect that they have been "black-balled" or that they are now considered a risk.

WOCN has also observed that this trend of abrupt departure from executive roles did not seem to hold true for the majority of mainstream/white women executives. In fact, they appear to be in their roles with support and backing from their Boards and staff, and are able to leave with a fair amount of preparation and planning, often with accolades that follow them and lead to other opportunities. Another observation is that these abrupt departures are not indicative of all women of color executives – there are some who have been able to stay in their role multiple years with full support from their organizations as well. WOCN wanted to determine what conditions or factors make it generally possible for mainstream/white women as well as for some women of color to maintain their roles or transition with little problem, and what conditions and factors occur that make it difficult for many women of color who have had to leave or transition from their programs under duress.

within the anti-violence against women movement appeared to have a more difficult time than mainstream/white executives maintaining their leadership roles. WOCN wanted to discover why this was happening, how this was playing out, and to identify some solutions to address this problem. Ms. Foundation agreed that this was an important issue to explore and provided a grant to support this research to create solutions.

Assumptions

There are certain assumptions that WOCN has acquired through observation and testimony from women of color executives across the country:

1. Women of color in general tend to experience stereotyping that characterizes them as "aggressive" or "overly questioning", causing them to be misread by mainstream/white colleagues.
2. Many women of color executives are not as well nurtured or supported by their direct supervisors or Board Members.
3. Women of color executives are often given little or no room to grow and make mistakes in their roles.
4. Mainstream/white women are allowed a wider margin of error, and opportunity to remedy mistakes, often with assistance and support from others around them including their Boards or direct supervisors, than those allowed of their women of color counterparts.
5. Frequently, the management and leadership skills of supervisors and Board Members are lacking, making it difficult for women of color to succeed under such conditions.

Assumptions (continued)

6. Women of color executives have few people they can look to for mentoring or peers in similar roles to serve as a sounding board, further increasing their chances of making mistakes or missing factors that could help in averting possible mistakes.

7. There appears to be an "old girls network," comparable to corporate settings, where those in the majority who have professionalized the field of anti- domestic and sexual violence have set up an informal network that favors individuals and groups with similar identities of those in power and marginalizes those with dissimilar identities.

8. Young women are greatly impacted, with those reflecting majority identities likely to follow in the footsteps and become a part of the "old girls network", and those who are in the minority possibly being pushed out, walking in fear of being pushed out, or leaving the movement altogether to avoid a similar fate.

Given these assumptions, two projects were commissioned and completed on behalf of the WOCN: *The 2007 WOMEN OF COLOR NATIONAL SURVEY: Women of Color in the Anti-Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Movement* and *WOMEN OF COLOR LEADERSHIP: A Look at the Experiences of Women of Color Executives in the Anti- Violence Against Women's Movement (2011*).

2007 SURVEY

As mentioned previously, from 2006-2007, the WOCN conducted a national survey of women of color at every level of programming within sexual and domestic violence service agencies to track their experiences within their programs. The need for this survey was born from persistent calls and reports received from women of color regarding experiences of isolation, marginalization, targeting, and unfair treatment.

Administered to 232 women of color respondents, the 2007 report revealed the need for further

research regarding the experiences of WOC within the sexual assault and domestic violence field nationwide.

2007 Survey respondents reported the following:

- 38.6% of respondents not working in a racially/ethnically specific organization "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that their skills and accomplishments were under- valued and/or under-compensated.
- 39.6% of respondents not working in a racially/ethnically specific organization "agreed" or "strongly agreed" the issue of privilege was disregarded because decision makers at the organization believed themselves/the organization to be non-racist, culturally inclusive, etc., despite the use of offensive terms to describe racial or ethnic groups or people in their organizations.
- 44% of respondents not working in a racially/ethnically specific organization reported that they had experienced a "lack of awareness and/or acknowledgement that domestic and sexual violence had distinctive implications for women, families, and communities of color" in their organization.

Diversity of Management
- 70.4% of respondents not working in a racially/ethnically specific organization stated that the racial make-up of the upper management of their organization was majority white or Caucasian.
- 69.0% of respondents not working in a racially/ethnically specific organization stated that the racial make-up of the board of directors of their current organization was

majority white or Caucasian.

Presence of Mentoring
- 23.8% of respondents not working in a racially/ethnically specific organization "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that someone is mentoring them in the organization.
- 39.7% of respondents not working in a racially/ethnically specific organization reported that they had experienced a lack of mentoring in their current organization.

The 2007 survey compelled us to take a closer look and attempt to capture the experiences of WOC executives through this current study:

WOMEN OF COLOR LEADERSHIP
A Look at the Experiences of Women of Color Executives in the Anti-Violence Against Women's Movement:

Funded by the Ms. Foundation, the Women of Color Research Project surveyed Women of Color (WOC) and white women executives from the sexual assault and domestic violence field, nationwide. Respondents either worked in executive/management positions at the time of the survey or within the past 10 years.

The project sought to identify strategies for overcoming barriers experienced by WOC in accessing and maintaining executive and/or leadership positions within the anti-violence against women field for women of color.

The survey revealed attitudinal, systemic-institutional, and/or ideological challenges faced by women of color and white allies that hinder opportunities for professional advancement or broader social justice work for WOC in this field. Examination of these challenges yielded recommendations for shifts in policy, practice, training and education; and as well as 'correctives' to a larger 'movement' which some suggest seems to have stalled in momentum and lost sight of its larger mission.

WOCN recognizes that not every woman of color has experienced similar marginalization with the movement, and many have both learned from and have inspired the movement toward change and success. In fact, there have been many prominent women of color who have held prestigious roles and have had national and international impact. However, we cannot discount that there are real issues and patterns to that should be addressed and this research project has allowed us to further explore these issues.

Methodology

The WOCN Research Project was designed to discover if disparate experiences occur for women of color executives and leaders within the Anti-Violence Against Women (sexual assault and domestic violence) field in comparison to their white counterparts.

The project was conducted in three phases: Phase I: WOCN Research Project Survey; Phase II: Follow-up Interviews; and Phase III: Data Analysis. Quantitative and qualitative data was synthesized and assembled into a final report with recommendations.

Phase I: Literature Review & Research Project Survey

Anecdotal information indicated that within the anti-violence against women field, women of color experienced significant professional challenges related to the intersection of anti-oppression and sexual/domestic violence. In order to test this hypothesis a two-part survey was conducted.

- A literature review was conducted in order to gain insight on previous work in this area, to anticipate potential barriers, and to aide in developing questions for the project.
- A survey questionnaire was disseminated electronically to list serves comprised of national community of color and sexual assault & domestic violence organizations.
- The data were loaded into Survey Monkey, a web based data collection and analysis program. Variables on age, level of education, experiences of ethnic/race-related bias, etc., were analyzed. All identifying information was stripped from the data and only the primary research associate had access to the codes.
- Responses received from returned surveys were reviewed and utilized as a formative phase of the study, by helping to clarify the questions that needed to be probed in greater depth for the

follow-up interviews. Qualitative data were summarized and analyzed for themes and pertinent information.

- The content gleaned from Phase I served as a sort of "focus group" of women from the field who were able to identify key threads of inquiry for Phase II. Once follow-up interview questions were developed, they were tested through phone interviews with WOCN advisors.
- The follow-up interviews and analysis yielded further contextualization of the organization's histories, philosophical roots, programs and theoretical bases.

Phase II: Follow-up Interviews

This portion of the project involved twenty in- depth interviews of women of color and white women who completed the Research Project Survey. These interviews were conducted via confidential telephone calls, which lasted between 1-2 hours. In some instances, these calls were supplemented with additional written information. Interviewees represented a range of ages, geographical location, length of time affiliated with this work, position within executive/leadership strata, and ethnicities. All of the interviewees were selected from surveys completed by a larger pool of women via the electronic survey process. Each follow-up interview respondent was assigned a number for reference purposes and to protect her

anonymity.

The follow-up interviewees/respondents were asked questions related to demographics, accessibility, and organizational capacity to foster WOC leadership development. Further, interviewees were asked to comment upon current practices for reducing/eliminating racial bias within the movement. Invariably all respondents were enthusiastic in their support for this project, its outcome and the various ways in which it may influence not only the day-to-day experiences of women working in this field and those utilizing services, but also reinvigorate the national discourse related to the intersections of anti-violence against women and social justice.

Phase III: Data Summary, Analyses, and Recommendations

Upon receipt of literature review, returned surveys and completion of follow-up interviews the data was compiled and analyzed. The quantitative, qualitative information gathered from returned surveys and follow-up interviews were compared to current trends and literature that were reviewed during the course of this project. Recommendations made within this final report are compiled from summarizing and analyzing the survey data and the information obtained from the follow-up interviews.

Findings

The electronic survey was completed by a self-selected group of individuals, primarily women who have worked in domestic violence and sexual assault service provider agencies and statewide coalitions. The survey was designed to determine whether women of color in executive positions have experienced inequitable treatment at their places of work, how they have handled such occurrences, and what support services have been provided to them at their places of work.

Respondents

Fifty-three (53) female respondents who currently hold, or have held management positions in mainstream, domestic violence, and/or sexual assault agencies or coalitions within the past 10 years completed this survey.

Age

The average age of respondents was approximately 44 years old. Their ages ranged from 31 to 65 years at the time the surveys were completed.

Average Age: 44 years
Median Age: 43 years old
Standard Deviation: 1.1 years Youngest: 31 years old
Oldest: 65 years old
Birthdays calculated at time of 6/1/2010 (average date of response)
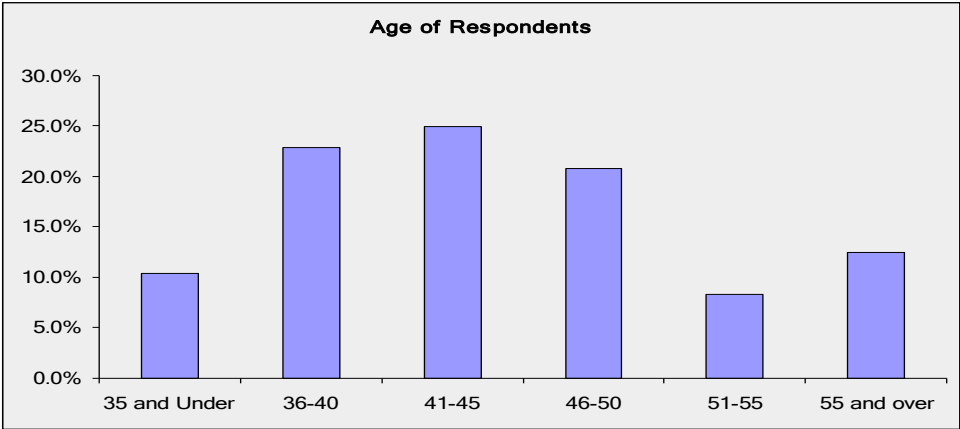
Age of Respondents		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Frequency
35 and Under	10.4%	5
36-40	22.9%	11
41-45	25.0%	12
46-50	20.8%	10
51-55	8.3%	4
55 and over	12.5%	6
answered question		48
skipped question		5

Ethnic/Racial Identity

The majority of respondents self-identified as Women of Color, 11 white allies responded to the survey and some of the allies were interviewed as well. Throughout the survey respondents answered primarily the same questions; in one section however, those respondents who identified as White/European-American were asked to respond to a different series of questions than those answered by women of color.

Racial Identification of Respondents
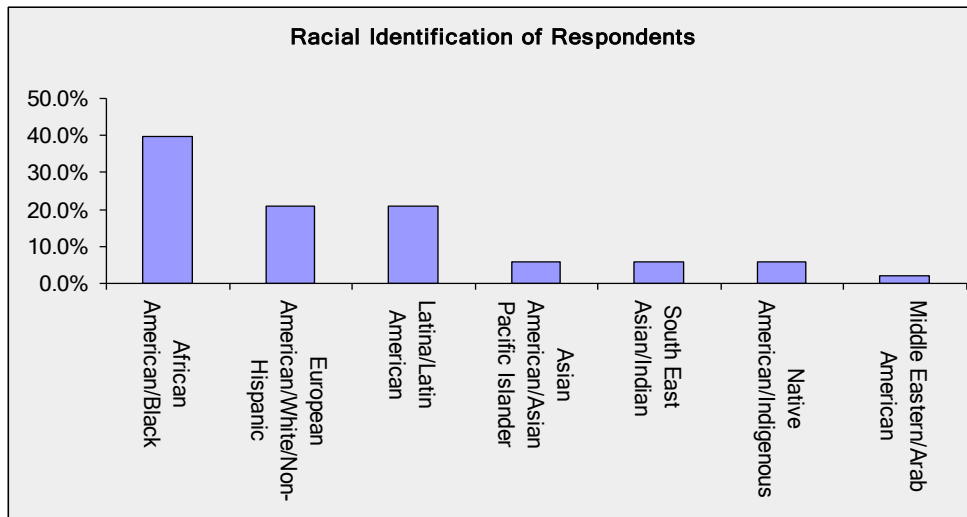
Racial Identification

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
African American/Black	39.6%	21
European American/White/Non-Hispanic	20.8%	11
Latina/Latin American	20.8%	11
Asian American/Asian Pacific Islander	5.7%	3
South East Asian/Indian	5.7%	3
Native American/Indigenous	5.7%	3
Middle Eastern/Arab American	1.9%	1
answered question		**53**
skipped question		**0**

Respondents

Women of Color and White Women
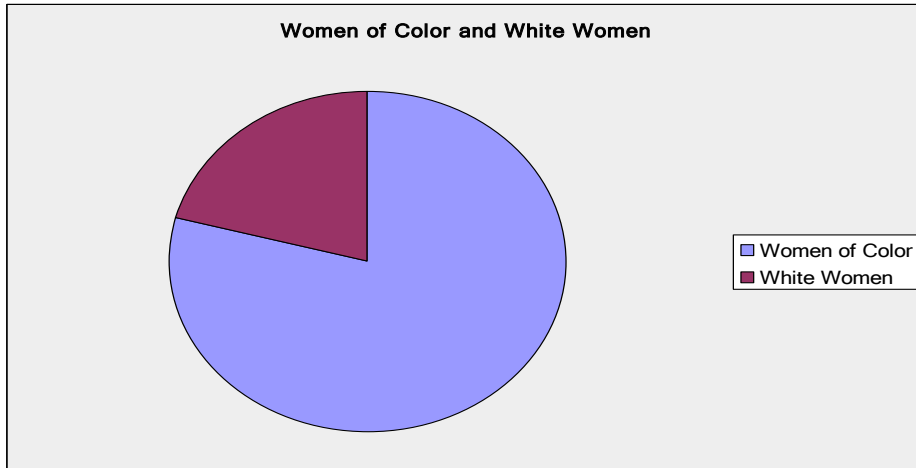
Women of Color and White Women		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Women of Color (Includes Native American/Indigenous, Middle Eastern/Arab American)	79.2%	42
White Women	20.8%	11
answered question		**53**
skipped question		**0**
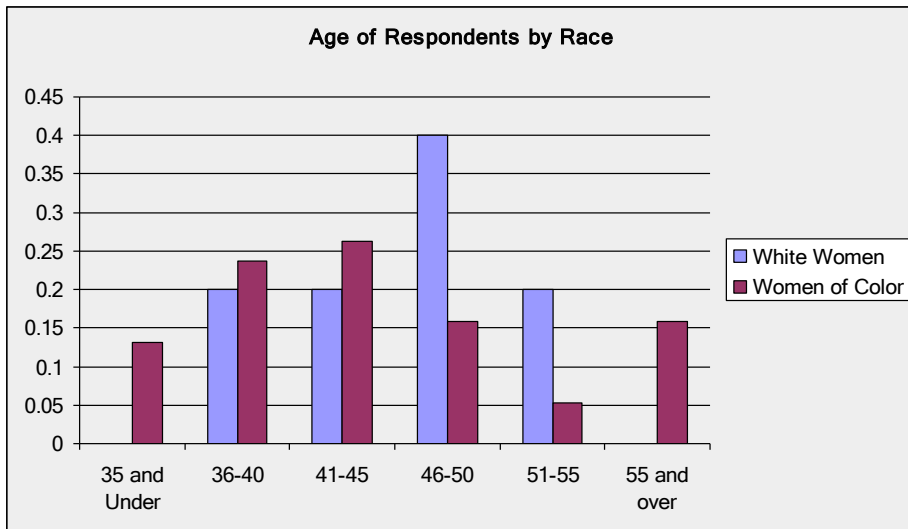
The age of respondents did not vary significantly between White and WOC respondents.

Education

The majority of respondents (88.7%, n=47) reported that they are college educated, and 54.7% (n=29) had completed graduate-level education at various levels.
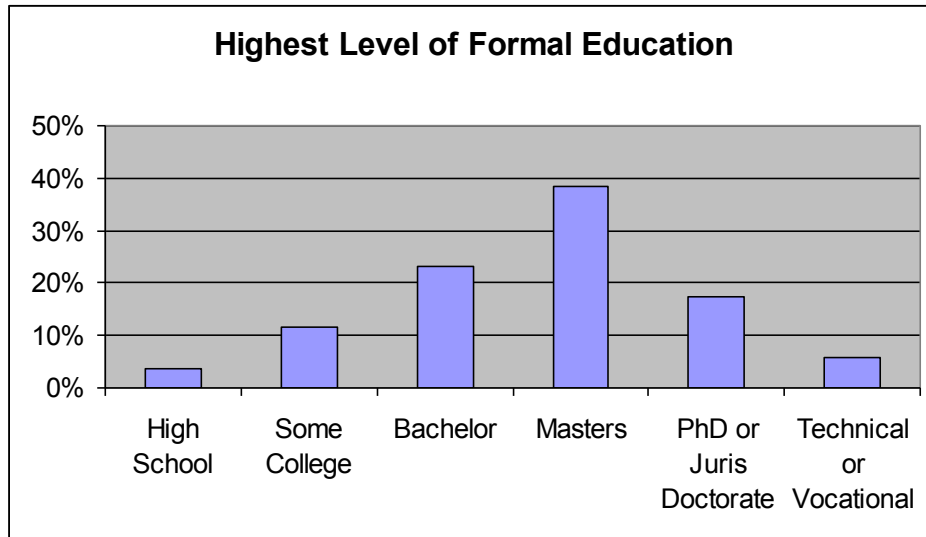
Highest Level of Formal Education

Highest Level of Formal Education		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
High School	3.8%	2
Some College	11.5%	6
Bachelors	23.1%	12
Masters	38.5%	20
PhD or Juris Doctorate	17.3%	9
Technical or Vocational	5.8%	3
	answered question	**52**
	skipped question	**1**

Education (continued)
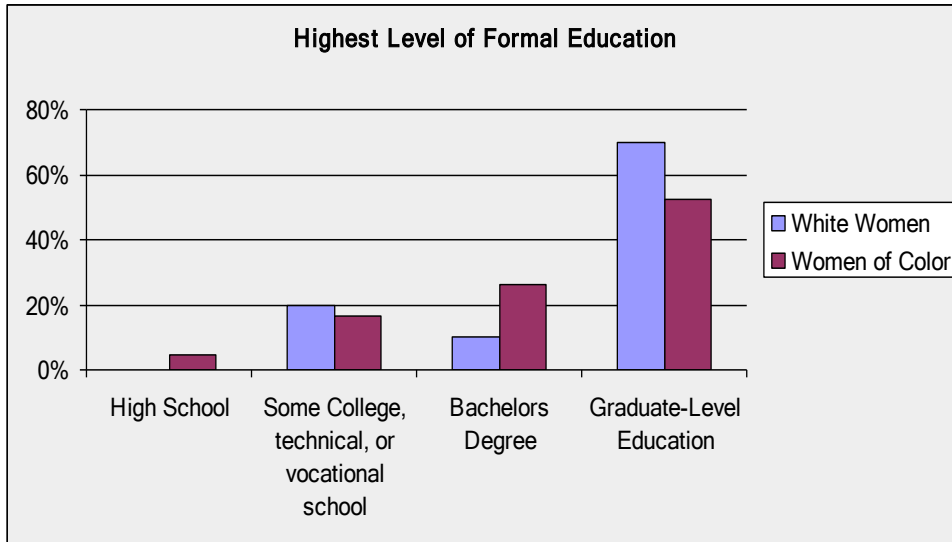
Highest Level of Formal Education

What is your highest level of formal education?				
Answer Options	**Women of Color**	**White Women**	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
High School	2	0	3.8%	2
Some College, Technical, or Vocational School	7	2	17.3%	9
Bachelors Degree	11	1	23.1%	12
Graduate-Level Education	22	7	55.8%	29
	42	*10*	*52*	*52*
			skipped question	1

Respondents by Regions of the USA

Respondents from 25 states and from each geographic region of the United States as identified below participated in the survey.
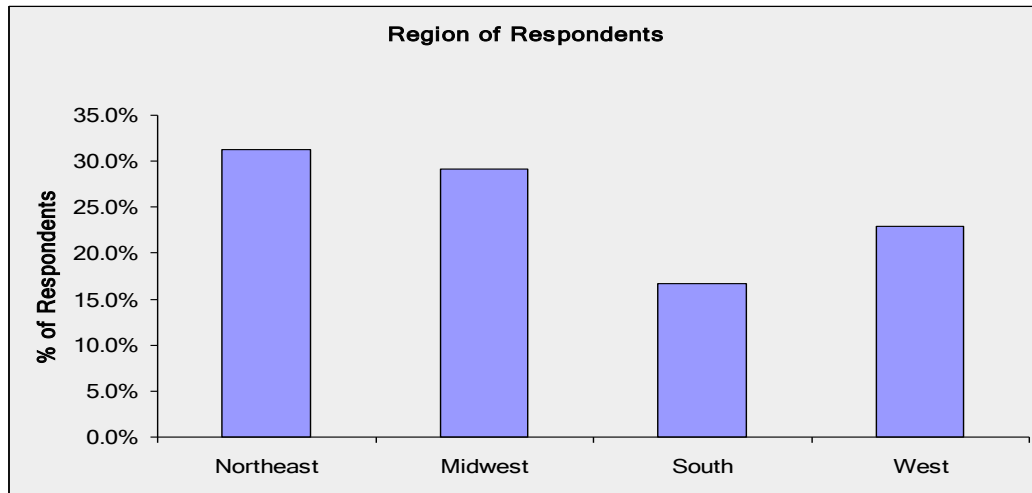
Region of Respondents		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Northeast	31.3%	15
Midwest	29.2%	14
South	16.7%	8
West	22.9%	11
answered question		48
skipped question		5

Regions were classified as follows:

Northeast: Connecticut, District of Columbia, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Massachusetts

Midwest: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Nebraska, Kansas

South: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, Georgia

West: California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Hawaii, Utah, Wyoming, Arizona

Organizational Information

Type of work
- 34.6% (18/52) identified their organization as "a free standing domestic violence agency"
- 23.1% (12/52) identified their organization as "an umbrella multi-service body of which domestic violence and sexual assault services are part of a larger scope of programs"
- 19.2% (10/52) identified their organization as "a free standing dual domestic violence and sexual assault agency"
- 9.6% (5/52) identified their organization as "a free standing sexual assault agency"
- 7.7% (4/52) identified their organization as a type of coalition.
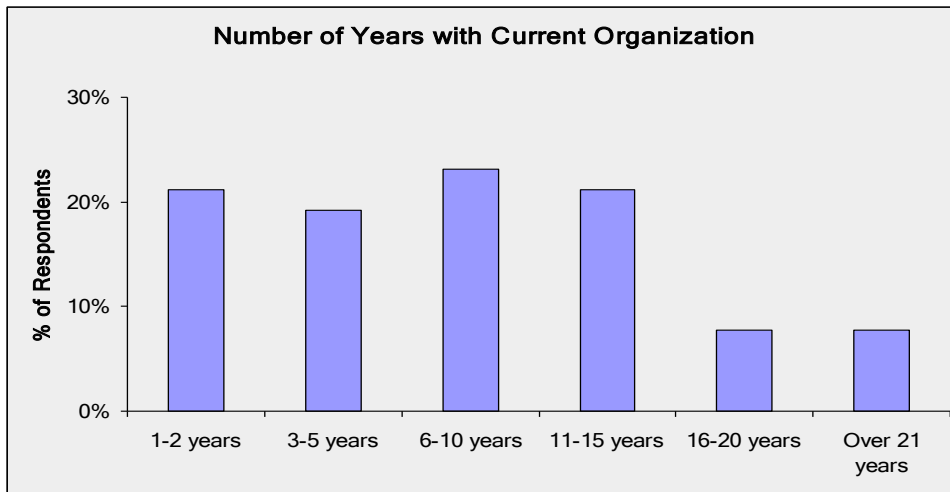
Number of Years with Current Organization

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1-2 years	21.2%	11
3-5 years	19.2%	10
6-10 years	23.1%	12
11-15 years	21.2%	11
16-20 years	7.7%	4
Over 21 years	7.7%	4
	answered question	52
	skipped question	1

Organizational Information (continued)
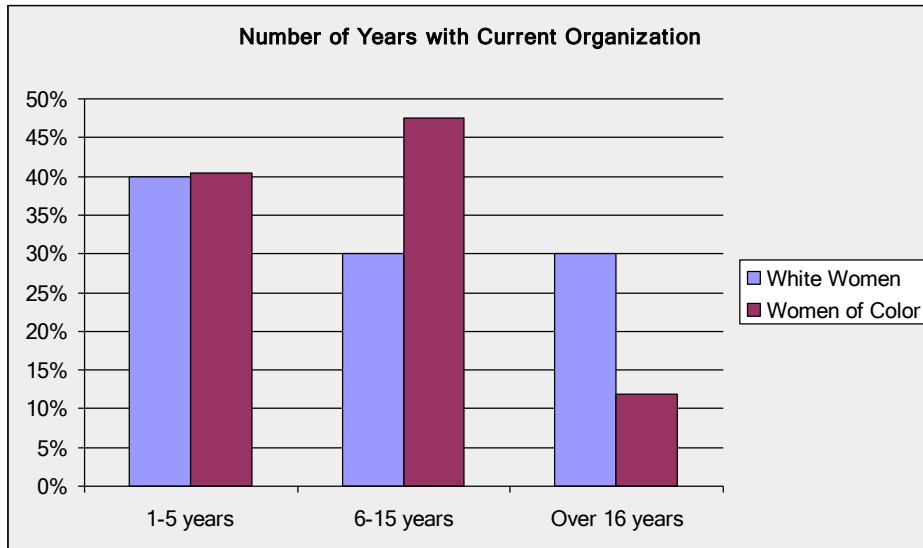
Number of Years with Current Organization

When did you join your current organization?				
Answer Options	**Women of Color**	**White Women**	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
1-5 years ago	17	4	21.2%	11
6-15 years ago	20	3	19.2%	10
Over 16 years ago	5	3	23.1%	12
	42	*10*	*52*	*52*
			skipped question	1

Current Job Title
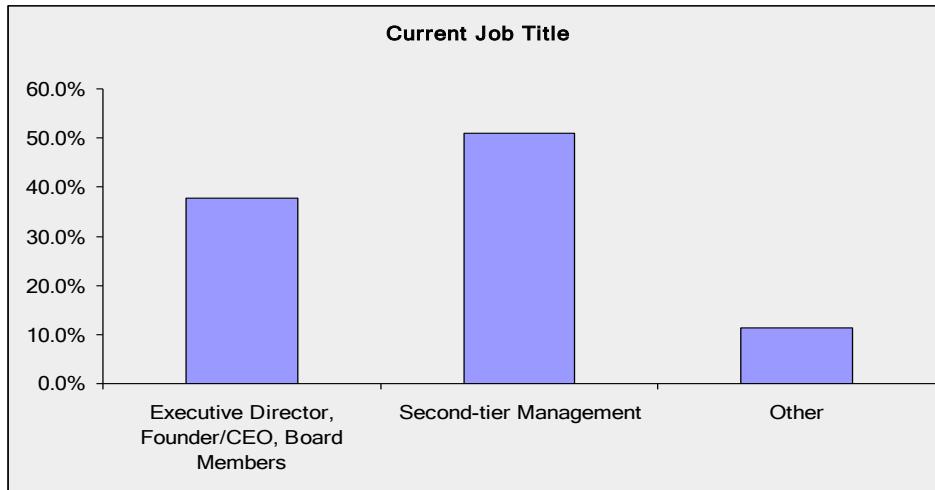
Current Job Title		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Executive Director, Founder/CEO, Board Members	37.7%	20
Second-tier Management	50.9%	27
Other	11.3%	6
answered question		**53**
skipped question		**0**

Second-tier management includes program directors, program coordinators, and program managers. Other includes consultants, city prosecutors, and grant directors.

Current Job Title White Women and Women of Color
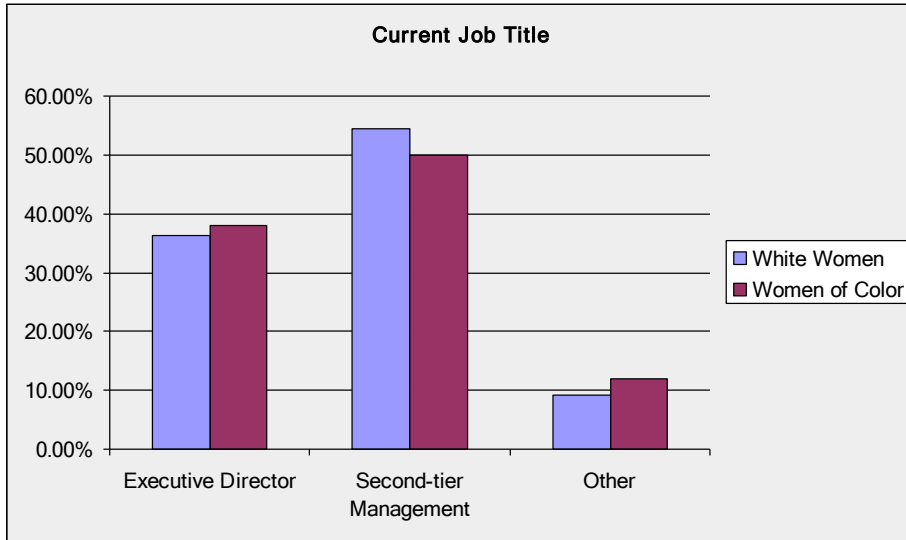
Current Job Title

Answer Options	Women of Color	White Women	Response Percent	Response Count
Executive Director	16	4	37.7%	20
Second-tier Management	21	6	50.9%	27
Other	5	1	11.3%	6
	42	*11*	*53*	53
			skipped question	0

Changes in Job Title from Time of Hire
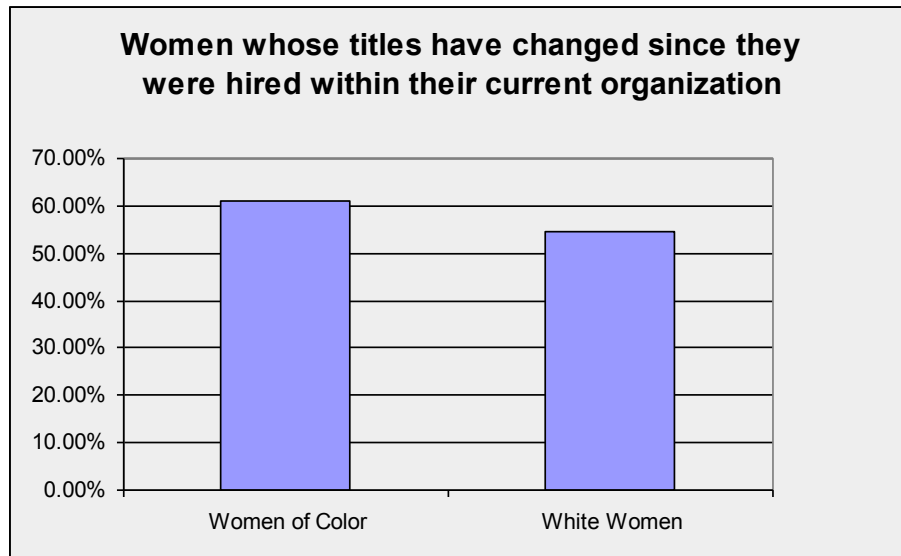
Transition in Position

- 59.6% (28/47) of respondents currently hold a different title than the title they held at the time of their original hire.

- 61.1% (22/36) of Women of Color respondents and 54.5% (6/11) of White respondents currently hold different titles than those they held at their original time of hire.

Mentoring

- 76.9% (40/52) of respondents identified formal mentoring was provided within their DV/SA workplace.

- 86.8% of Women Of Color (WOC), (n= 33/38) reported that they had been in a position to support other WOC who have directly experienced or witnessed ethnic or race-related bias in their DV/SA workplace.

Ethnicity/race cross tabulated with discriminatory experiences

- 87.5% (14/16) of African-American women, 81.8% (9/11) of Latina women, and 100% (8/8) of Asian American/Asian Pacific Islander, South East Asian/Indian, Native American/Indigenous, Middle Eastern/Arab American, WOC respondents reported a lack of cultural sensitivity or specific understanding at the workplace which they perceived to be ethnic or racial bias.

- 93.8% (15/16) of African-American women, 72.7% (8/11) of Latina women, and 87.5% (7/8) of Asian American/Asian Pacific Islander, South East Asian/Indian, Native American/Indigenous, Middle Eastern/Arab American, WOC respondents reported stereotyping in the workplace which they perceived as ethnic/racially related.

Discrimination in the Workplace

Discrimination in the DV/SA workplace which was perceived to be ethnic/race-related					
	Race				
Answer Options	African American/Black	Latina/Latin American	Asian American/Asian Pacific Islander, South East Asian/Indian, Native American/Indigenous, Middle Eastern/Arab American	Response Percent	Response Count
Cultural Ignorance	87.5% (14/16)	81.8% (9/11)	100% (8/8)	88.6%	31
Stereotyping	93.8% (15/16)	72.7% (8/11)	87.5% (7/8)	85.7%	30
Silencing or exclusion	43.8% (7/16)	72.7% (8/11)	75% (6/8)	60.0%	21
Marginalization	56.3% (9/16)	45.5% (5/11)	75% (6/8)	57.1%	20
Isolation	50% (8/16)	54.5% (6/11)	75% (6/8)	57.1%	20
Surveillance	37.5% (6/16)	54.5% (6/11)	50% (4/8)	45.7%	16
Glass Ceiling	43.8% (7/16)	36.4% (4/11)	50% (4/8)	42.9%	15
Cooptation	18.8% (3/16)	27.3% (3/11)	37.5% (3/8)	25.7%	9
	16	11	8		30
				answered question	35
				skipped question	7

Discrimination in the Workplace (bar chart: Cultural Ignorance, Stereotyping, Silencing or exclusion, Marginalization, Isolation, Surveillance, Glass Ceiling, Cooptation)
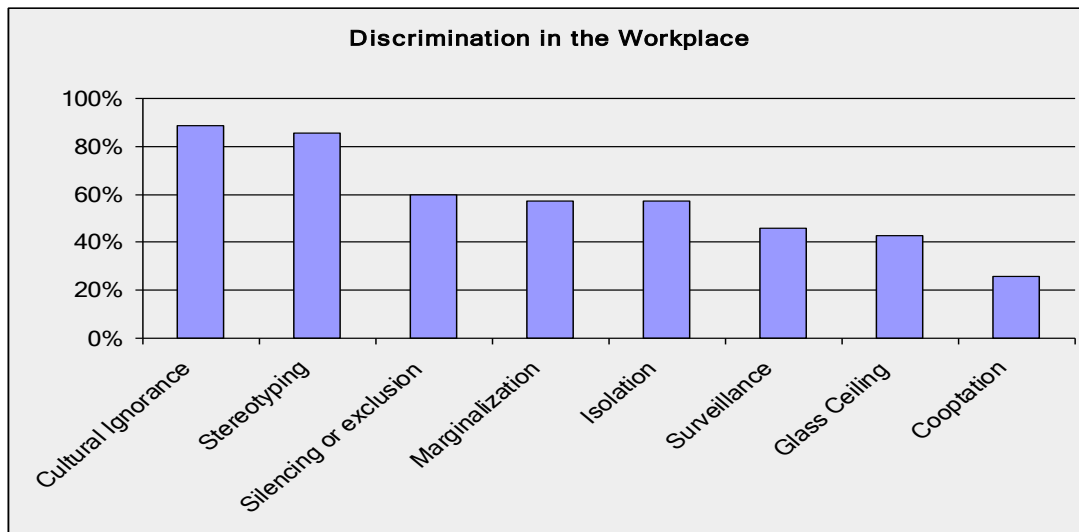
Discrimination in the Workplace (continued)

87.5% (14/16) of African-American women, 81.8% (9/11) of Latina women and 100% (8/8) of Asian American/Asian Pacific Islander, South East Asian/Indian, Native American/Indigenous, Middle Eastern/Arab American women reported having experienced cultural ignorance at the workplace which they perceived to be ethnic or race-related.

93.8% (15/16) of African-American women and 72.7% (8/11) of Latina women and 87.5% (7/8) of Asian American/Asian Pacific Islander, South East Asian/Indian, Native American/Indigenous, Middle Eastern/Arab American women reported having experienced stereotyping at the workplace which they perceived to be ethnic or race-related.

Treatment of White Women in Comparison to their Women of Color Counterparts

Based upon your observations, White women are generally treated _____ with regards to opportunities, expectations, or other experiences than their WOC counterparts?

- More favorably
- Less favorably
- No differently
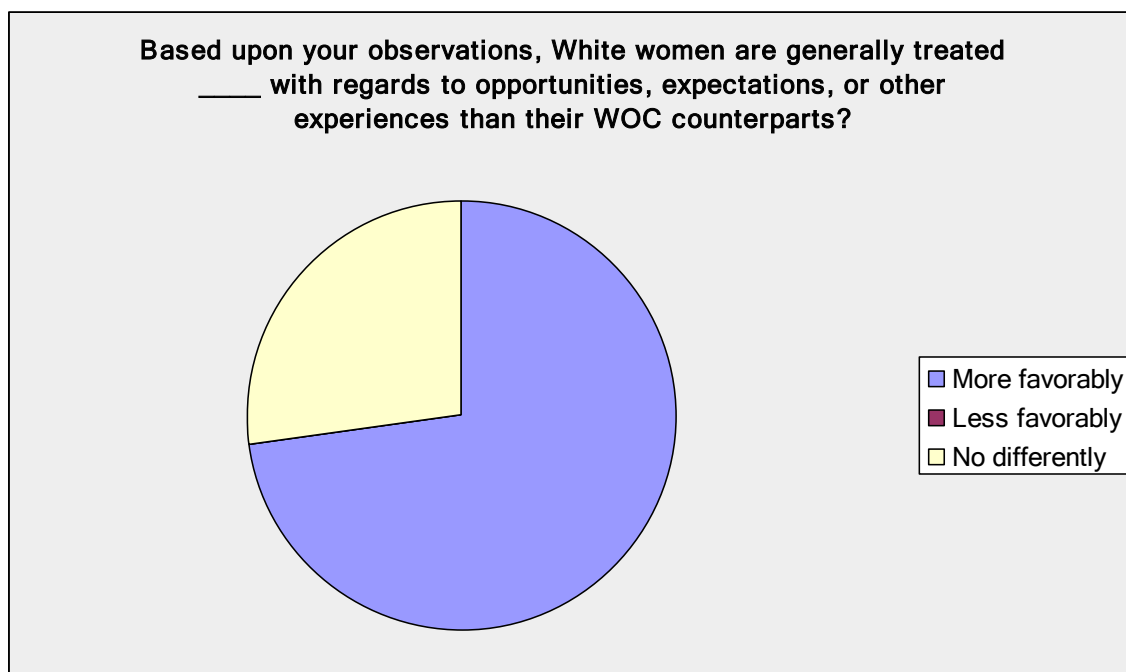
81.8% (12/14) of White/European-American respondents stated that they identified situations in which they perceived an ethnic or racial bias against women of color in their workplaces. One white ally stated: "in a largely white state, I can certainly see plenty of unaddressed racism beneath the liberal, progressive veneer… more specific to the movement, I would definitely say there are still plenty of instances of race-related bias in most organizations at both the Board and the staff level." Another respondent cited "Eurocentric approaches disguised as feminist models," as a challenge to contemporary domestic violence and sexual assault work.

Discrimination in the Workplace (continued)

Among White/European-American respondents who identified the presence of race-related bias in the workplace, 100% (n=9) reported instances of White women advocating on behalf of Women of Color in these situations. However, one respondent observed that "it was rare, mostly because the micro-aggressions were hard for White people to recognize. Often, the White people would validate that someone had been rude or thoughtless, but failed to recognize the racial insult."

72.7% (8/11) of White/European-American respondents reported that White women are generally treated more favorably with regards to opportunities, expectations, or other experiences than their Women of Color counterparts.

After years of advocacy and intervention on the part of women of color working in this field, the WOCN was able to articulate further some of these forms of "micro-aggression" and eventually develop a working set of terms and concepts that described the various types of bias WOC experience in the workplace. In addition to attempting to qualify and quantify WOC's experiences with subtle forms of discrimination, the WOCN was also interested in testing the terms for their accuracy (measured by respondents recognition of the terms' implications and thus selecting it in the survey). A sampling of some of the comments from respondents below provides a glimpse into their understanding of the terms (i.e. all of the terms in the survey are not exemplified in the following graph).

Qualitative Survey Responses from WOC:

Have you ever experienced any of the following in your DV/SA workplace, which you perceive to be ethnic/race related? Please describe.

Cultural Ignorance

Examples of cultural ignorance include "inappropriate comments made under the guise of humor." One respondent stated that a coworker "could not fathom Blacks being professionals or middle-class."

Several respondents shared how coworkers were ignorant of their offenses and "had no clue that they were behaving in that manner until it was brought to their attention."

Cultural ignorance was also exhibited toward service populations by staff and Board members who "don't understand the dynamics of domestic violence and issues that minorities face."

Stereotyping

Examples given of stereotyping include "comments about clients or others that are casually 'tagged' by race is if race were an explanatory factor in why someone behaved or thought a certain way."

Glass Ceiling

One respondent reported that she was rejected for a job after being told she "was not 'the image' the agency needed." Subsequently, a "less qualified person of European descent" was hired for the same position.

Another woman stated that "because the executive management team is comprised of all white women, the glass ceiling for women of color stands at the program manager level."

Marginalization

One respondent stated that when she was younger, "it was hard to decipher which 'ism' I was experiencing."

Surveillance

One respondent reported that she experiences "interference and surveillance when working with women of color," and has been confronted with "accusations of showing preference."

Silencing or Exclusion

Examples of exclusion include "not being identified by coworkers if encountered out of the context of the workplace"

One Middle-Eastern respondent stated that her picture was removed from the front office after 9/11, and she was told "someone broke the frame and was ashamed so they took it."

One respondent also reported "tokenism" as "only one of two women of color in the agency."

86.7% of respondents identified experiencing "consequences" of ethnic or race-related bias in the workplace. The most commonly cited consequences were emotional and psychological (84.4%), social (51.1%), and cultural (44.4%).

Both WOC and white aspiring allies were asked:

In general, have you observed any of the following consequences or outcomes as a result of ethnic or race-related bias in the workplace?

In general, have you observed any of the following consequences or outcomes as a result of ethnic or race-related bias in the workplace?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Emotional/psychological	84.4%	38
Social	51.1%	23
Cultural	44.4%	20
Material	42.2%	19
Physical	20.0%	9
Other	15.6%	7
None	13.3%	6
	answered question	45
	skipped question	8

The negative consequences of ethnic and race-related bias in the workplace appeared fairly consistent across regions and among members of all ethnic/racial identifications.

Consequences of Ethnic or Race-related Bias (continued)

WOC and white aspiring allies were asked:
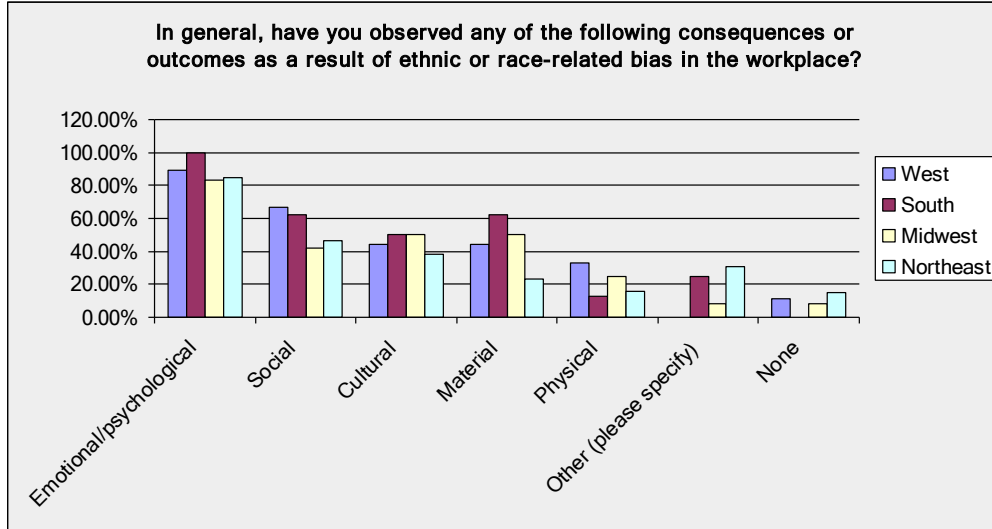
Organizational Changes - WOC and white aspiring allies were asked:
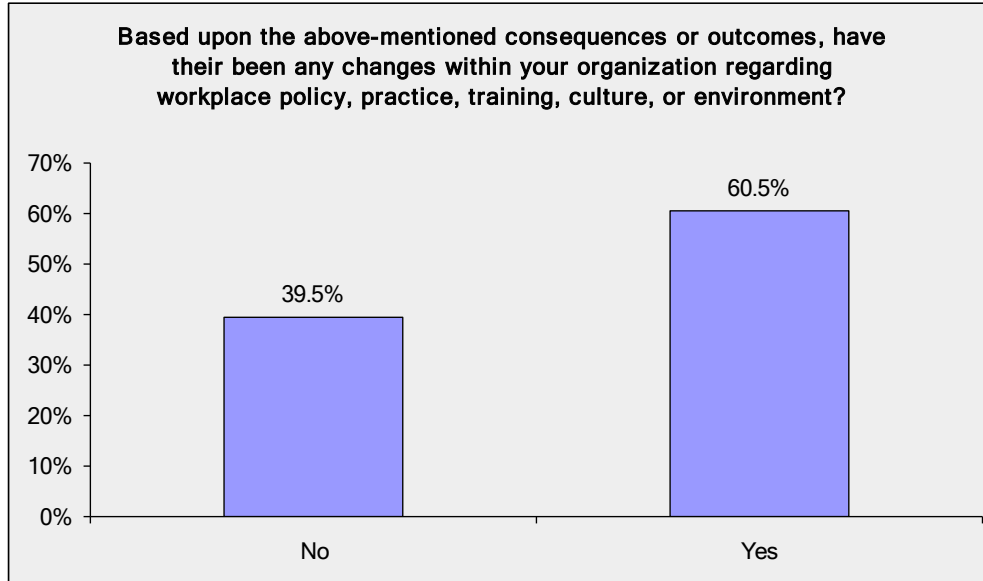
Of the 38 respondents who identified negative consequences of ethnic or race-related bias in the workplace, 39.5% (15/38) reported that no organizational changes had been made regarding workplace policy, practice, training, culture, or environment.

Consequences of Ethnic or Race-related Bias (continued)

Of the respondents who stated that changes were made in response to ethnic or race-related bias in the workplace, the most commonly identified strategy was the implementation of additional training in the areas of cultural competency, cross-cultural communication, and conflict resolution (n=10, 43.5%). Other identified changes include confronting challenges with mediation, and the formation of a short-lived "Cultural Competence committee."

WOC were asked:

Have you been in a position to support other WOC who have directly experienced or witnessed ethnic or race-related bias in your DV/SA workplace?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Yes	86.8%	33
No	13.2%	5
answered question		**38**
skipped question		**15**

Similarly, 86.8% of WOC respondents (33/38) responded that they had been in a position to support other WOC who have directly experienced or witnessed ethnic or race-related bias in their DV/SA workplace.
(see appendix)

Mentoring

WOC and white aspiring allies asked if mentoring was available in their organization:

Formal Mentoring?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Yes	76.9%	40
No	23.1%	12
answered question		**52**
skipped question		**1**

76.9% (40/52) of respondents identified the existence of formal mentoring within their DV/SA workplace.

Formal Mentoring by Race
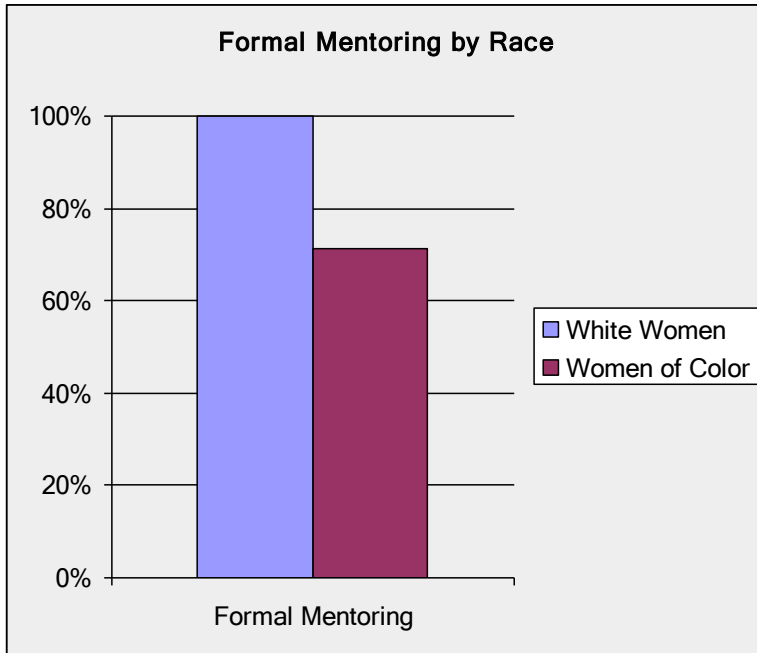
100% (10/10) of White Women, but only 71.4% (30/42) of Women of Color confirmed the existence of formal mentoring within their current organization. Although this difference is not statistically significant (P=0.092, Fischer's exact test), it is certainly an area for further study in surveys taken of larger sample sizes.

Workplace Race-related Bias

WOC were asked:

Have you experienced any of the following in your DV/SA workplace which you perceive to be ethnic/race-related?
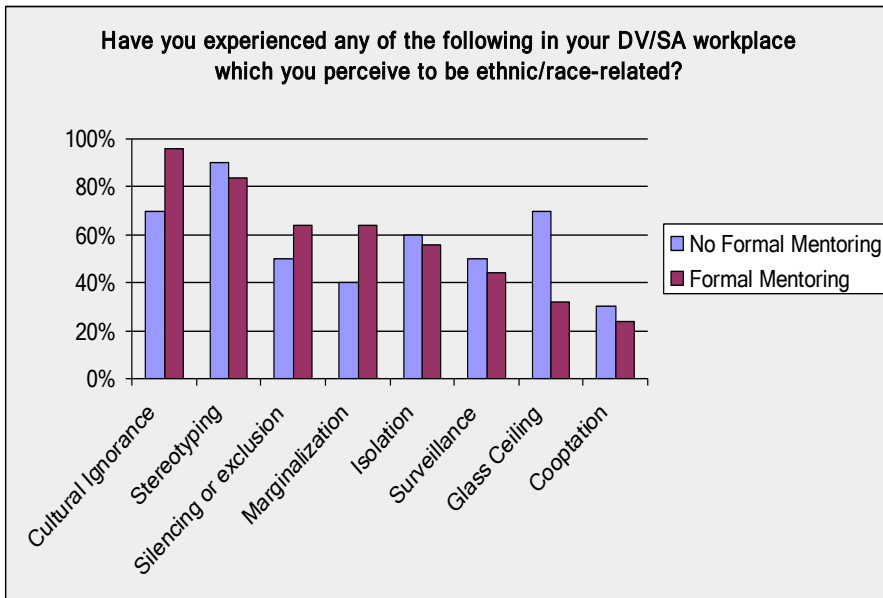
Consequences of Ethnic or Race-related Bias (continued)

Types of Discrimination by Mentoring				
Answer Options	**Formal Mentoring**	**No Formal Mentoring**	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Cultural Ignorance	24	7	88.6%	31
Stereotyping	21	9	85.7%	30
Silencing or exclusion	16	5	60.0%	21
Marginalization	16	4	57.1%	20
Isolation	14	6	57.1%	20
Surveillance	11	5	45.7%	16
Glass Ceiling	8	7	42.9%	15
Cooptation	6	3	25.7%	9
	25	*10*	*35*	*35*
			skipped question	*6*

There is insufficient evidence to reject the independence of the formal mentoring and workplace discrimination. However, this is an area for further study, as a limited number of respondents precluded any in-depth statistical analysis.
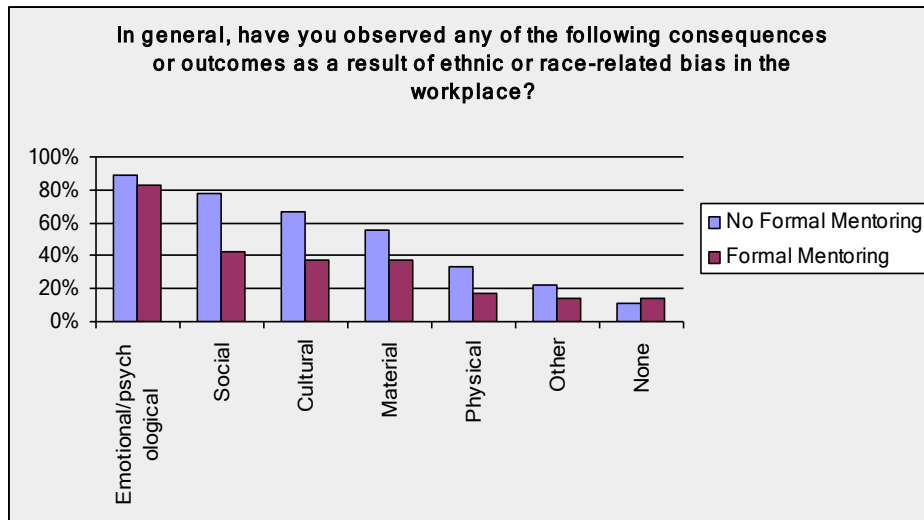
Women of Color in Executive Positions

WOC were asked:

In general, have you observed any of the following consequences or outcomes as a result of ethnic or race-related bias in the workplace?				
Answer Options	**Formal Mentoring**	**No Formal Mentoring**	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Emotional/psychological	82.90%	88.90%	84.1%	37
Social	42.90%	77.80%	50.0%	22
Cultural	37.10%	66.70%	43.2%	19
Material	37.10%	55.60%	40.9%	18
Physical	17.10%	33.30%	20.5%	9
Other	14.30%	22.20%	15.9%	7
None	14.30%	11.10%	13.6%	6
			answered question	**44**
			skipped question	**8**

77.8% (7/9) of women whose current workplace does not have a formal mentoring program, but only 42.9% (15/35) of women whose current workplaces does have a formal mentoring program reported social consequences as a result of ethnic or race-related conflict in the workplace. Although this difference is not statistically significant (P=0.132, Fischer's exact test), it is an area for further study.

Additional Quotes from Survey Respondents
Below is a sampling of comments provided by survey respondents that exemplify variances in discriminatory behavior previously articulated; specifically, issues of cultural ignorance, stereotyping, silencing/exclusion, marginalization, isolation, surveillance, glass ceiling, and cooptation (i.e. the practice of enveloping or taking over of oppositional view points in an effort to quell dissent). While there are not one-to-one correspondences, these examples are valuable as they relied upon the respondents' recognition of terms in an effort to identify a commensurate experience:

- "I thought I would never work in the field again because of the stigma attached to my part in the caucus and the aftermath of the huge nightmare that happened after we started addressing racism as an agency."
- "I believe that I have been labeled as a non-threatening Latina because I am light skinned, do not have an accent, and have formal register. For these reasons and because I am a hard worker, I have been given opportunities that my peers have not. Sadly, it has created this notion of "favoritism" which is disempowering."
- "When I first began to work for this movement I was hired because I was Latina. I was hired because I was bi-lingual and bi-cultural. The expectation was that I was going to develop a Latina Advocacy Program because of my skin and my language. The reality was that I was born in the United States that English was my first language and Spanish was my second. I was to have an understanding of all Latina

issues. I learned about them, but on my own and through the work that I did with the women I served."

- "I was given goals that included not to disagree with my direct supervisor in public, to support the direction of the agency regardless my opinion. I was accused of not being interested [because of] yawning in a meeting; in reality I was experiencing a condition that resulted in fatigue. I had to get a doctor's note to document why I was yawning. Now I just make sure I cross my 'Ts' and dot my 'Is.' I make sure that I follow up with all tasks that are given to me and make sure I complete them on time. I make sure not to rock the boat but when I need to say something I do it so that my supervisor doesn't think I'm resisting change and challenging her decisions."
- "I was asked if my name was 'Maria' by a fellow DV commissioner when I welcomed her to the commission."
- "A woman of color with no formal education can be admired because she is hard working with a sense of surprise. "
- "Ironically, even though I am the executive director, I feel like I'm quite isolated in terms of being a daughter of immigrants and South Asian."
- "White attorneys steal the 'good' i.e. win-able cases from attorneys of color."
- "Another experience was with our Board when we discussed our grantor requirements to be a more culturally diverse board. They insisted that culturally diverse could mean White folks speaking Spanish or growing up in a Latino community, etc. They wanted to define their version of cultural competence! It was disgusting."
- "I am in Virginia. This is still the south and racism in this area has not been extinguished. Those in positions such as mine are often challenged due to resentment felt by white women/men who have issues with race."

A More Detailed Picture

Follow-up Interviews & Emerging Themes

Critical to this project was a desire to capture the varied yet common experiences of women of color 'doing the work'. This was based upon a need to not only provide a qualitative context for data in the surveys, but also an attempt to document and provide a narrative of the experiences of women of color working in this field. While there are volumes of literature which examine the experiences of women of color victims and various systems' responses (i.e. therapeutic, law enforcement, medical, etc.), the dearth of literature related to women of color working in this field is both deafening and a shout for more inquiry.

Follow up interviews were conducted with 20 women over a period of 45 days, lasting on average 60-120 minutes each. The women were selected from the larger pool of survey respondents and the WOCN Advisory Board. We sought the best cross section possible based on: region, age, number of years in the field, and ethnicity. Additionally, reports of positive and negative experiences related to race and racial bias/discrimination also factored into the selection process for follow up interviews.

Much of the content supports and expands upon the areas of investigation in the survey. However, the follow up interviews also provided a space for these women to recount their positive and negative experiences, share invaluable wisdom and lessons learned over the years, and offer insightful strategies for advancing the visibility of women of color in leadership roles within the sexual assault and domestic violence field. In essence, as is traditional for many communities of color, it was a way to document oral histories and traditions. **Specific situations or quotes from interviewees are indicated by their coded numbers in parentheses (i.e. #__).**

Structure of Organization

All of the interviewees expressed an awareness of how power is assigned within hierarchical structures and were conscious of how power is managed as well as potential abuses of power based on position. Where hierarchies were identified, stratification was the result of a need for accountability and transparency. A majority of the interviewees (15) reported working in a traditionally hierarchical structure. Two organizations began as collectives and eventually transitioned into hierarchies as their organizations grew. Many commented on how the growth of their agencies necessitated the imposition of a layered structure of managers/directors/ supervisors/ coordinators/advocates. Descriptions provided for two additional agencies resembled that which exists among collectives but this term did not come up in their discussion. Twelve (12) interviewees specifically stated that their organizations were lead by

Executive Directors (ED). Generally, most indicated that some outside body, not involved in the day-to-day operations, governed their agencies: a Board of Directors (BoD), Council or Commissioners. Additionally, one respondent worked within a larger government body; one specifically mentioned "non-hierarchical"; one described their agency as a "flattened hierarchy" and the two tribal programs described their

organizations as having "no levels – the ED's position is in title only," and "a new management structure." Consciousness or awareness of the structure of the agencies speaks to the ideological and/or philosophical approach that guides the functioning of the organizations. In addition to abuses of power, the major perceived downside of hierarchies included a distancing or disconnect from the 'grass roots'. In response, many took steps to create greater accountability and transparency as well as opportunities to develop staff supervision and management skills, particularly among WOC staff.

Where we see the greatest commitment to WOC leadership development is with organizations that began not in response to violence against women (rooted in feminism), but in those intended to address inequalities experienced in larger society by underserved/un-served populations. Two Native American/Tribal programs are governed by traditions and practices specific to a cultural understanding of how Native peoples engage with one another. A few other non-traditional models seem to reveal a strong correlation with increasing WOC leadership:

- One was started by a white aspiring ally, not to combat sexual/domestic violence but for the expressed purpose of developing leadership and advocacy skills of largely immigrant WOC who would then use their skills and knowledge to address community issues; one was established by a WOC to organize communities on social justice issues; and someone that is different from them; instead, it speaks to the notion that 'cultural insiders' bring a level of insight to a position that is frequently

an unquantifiable (and uncompensated, and underappreciated) asset to the job.
- While sexual assault was the impetus and remains at the forefront of their work, the organization addresses violence against women within a social justice framework, which necessarily takes various forms of oppression into account, not just in terms of, how they work with survivors but in how they manage the organization. (#6, #8, #9).

This overview of organizational structures suggests several things related to the advancement of WOC in leadership positions in the anti-violence against women field: 1) that there is a greater need to contextualize sexual assault and domestic violence within a social justice framework; 2) that historical marginalization of WOC issues within 'feminism' remain in its various manifestations; and 3) when organizations are guided by principles associated with leadership, justice, or cultural (ethnic/racial) traditions, WOC experience greater opportunities for advancement.

Solicitation of Job Candidates & Qualifications

In general, respondents practice the typical and traditional routes and strategies for acquiring employees: wide solicitations by posting announcements (i.e. live and internet job boards, newspapers, word of mouth; from within the current staff and pool of volunteers, etc.). Diversity is frequently a consideration for hiring among interviewees. Overall, there appears to exist a general belief that organizations are more effective when they are at least minimally reflective of the communities they serve. This is not to say that people of different races or backgrounds cannot be of value to

someone that is different from them; instead, it speaks to the notion that 'cultural insiders' bring a level of insight to a position that is frequently an unquantifiable (and uncompensated, and underappreciated) asset to the job.

For example, the African American director of a division in a governmental agency recognized that there were no managers of color in his division for a newly created position that involved working with community agencies in a major urban city, and thus made diversity in hiring for this position a priority. The survey respondent was plucked from another department to head this new program. Since it was a new position, the internal solicitation was an opportunity to promote from within, someone with transferable skills *and* was representative of the community. This is significant because the director had a conscious awareness that community serving organizations – private or governmental – needed qualified staff that reflected the service populations. (#5) Alternately, the Native programs reported having previously hired non-Natives but that presumably the gulf of cultural (mis)understanding could not be overcome and thus those endeavors were unsuccessful. (#19) These types of considerations become challenging for those in the position to hire staff particularly when attempting to navigate the frequently coded waters of "affirmative action", "equal employment opportunities", "reverse racism", "hiring the best person for the job" and tokenism.

The common assumption is that it makes sense for sexual assault and domestic violence programs and organizations to have staff and volunteers that reflect a given community.

However, being 'representative' of a particular demographic becomes a bit of a paradox for many WOC in hiring. For example, being bilingual/bicultural is a frequently desired qualification in hiring (which generally does not generate additional compensation for candidates) and thus many bilingual/bicultural WOC are hired to work directly with immigrant or monolingual populations. Additionally, in many instances, these entry-level candidates are culled from the existing client or volunteer pool, may be immigrants, and/or report high school as their highest level of formal education. Respondents reveal that the perception of "working directly with the service provision is where WOC are needed most," combines with class/educational status to create a circumstance where many WOC do not rise as easily or frequently above these direct service positions. Thus, being representative pigeonholes many WOC into low-level positions as advocates, specialists, and coordinators; or, creates a mindset among those with hiring power to *primarily* think of WOC when it comes to the entry-level positions (i.e. it does not occur to the leadership to think of a WOC for a director/management position).

This speaks to a need for an attitudinal shift as it relates to what are considered 'appropriate' positions for WOC in this field. Since managers and directors are charged with maintaining operations, developing programs, and making sure that programs are on the right track, then it stands to reason that cultural insiders would also have pertinent insight and be able to make decisions as to how best manage and direct said strategies. In other words, if it is appropriate for WOC to provide direct services to said communities, it makes sense for WOC to have decision-making power

regarding the same communities, particularly when it involves new programming, policy and funding.

Since this project's solicitation was aimed at those in executive/leadership positions, and that the majority of respondents have academic degrees and/or professional certifications, one can conclude that there exists a correlation between these two variables. But one interviewee pointed out (and was echoed by others), that on paper, all things are not equal:

> "I know that if I didn't have a master's degree … I don't think I would have been considered as a serious candidate even though I know in the pool there were some who only had a BA. Since I started, I've put my MA on my business cards; there's usually a little snide comment made. If I had had the exact same credentials [as a white applicant] they would have had to select [for my position] based on something else…we have to have twice the degrees than our [white] counterparts." (#4)

While the majority of interviewees in management level positions have college/professional degrees, respondents expressed an awareness of how requiring such degrees (from Bachelors degrees to MSW or LCSW for some clinical counseling positions) as a standard condition for hiring can function as potential barriers to WOC who have less access/opportunity to higher education and thus miss other benefits and talents. This 'professionalization' of the field in turn supports an ill-informed, common refrain among mainstream leadership that 'WOC are less qualified" for executive positions. In an effort to retain/expand funding, mainstream leadership seems to be

missing how a good faith effort to ensure a particular level of quality assurance in social service programs (via professionalization) driven in many instances by funding sources in turn renders WOC advocates' ability to serve the community in mainstream settings out of reach. This trend toward science driven, 'evidence based/best practices' for demonstrated success, while valuable, marginalizes the anecdotal and experiential currency many WOC bring to the field.

This professionalization of the field, particularly as it relates to funding, has other potential ramifications:

> "There are a lot of non-profits who are now emulating businesses in an effort to make them more "successful" and bringing in more money. So they'll bring in some 'CEO' businessperson to run the agency having no connection to the anti-violence issues. For example, [there was a woman] from some bank; she was brought in to revitalize the agency. They ousted the WOC leader there and brought in some outsider to increase the revenues because they felt [the previous ED] was too close to the work and the grassroots and not focused on bringing in the money. Turned out to be a real mess and changed the direction of the agency." (#9)

While the veracity of this statement has not been independently confirmed, a majority of respondents explicitly articulated their frustration throughout the follow up interviews as to how the growing trend towards professionalization of the field is tilting sexual assault and domestic violence organizations away from grassroots or political origins, prompting a significant number of interviewees to declare "there is

no movement anymore" or "there's no 'movement' in the movement". Over the history of the anti-violence against women's movement, there have been concerns expressed as to how other professional sectors (i.e. criminal justice, medical/health care) have impacted the field particularly their ability to serve survivors from all walks of life. Examining the long-term impact of this professionalization upon the political ethos of the 'movement' and ultimately upon survivors (particularly which survivors receive services, the quality of those services, and which ones do not receive services) warrants greater research.

Finally, there was a correlation between agencies that expressed a significant commitment to WOC leadership in executive positions, and those where there was an explicit demand that job candidates embody an anti-oppressions framework or ideology as context for addressing gender based violence. This is consistent with an earlier discussion that positioned anti-violence against women within a social justice analysis rather than a feminist analysis. (#6, #8, #9).

Interviewing Process

Respondents described various processes in the selection of new employees. Panels, individual interviews and interviewing teams comprised of various staff/supervisors, community members, management/non-management, etc., were some of the strategies used to ensure organizations were able to identify staff who were the best fit for their agencies. In some instances, uses of new/digital technologies (i.e. Skype, on-line applications) were used particularly when interviewing out of state candidates. As is typical of many places of employment across myriad sectors, multiple interviews are

standard practice with various staff brought in at different phases of interviewing process. And, as was expected, respondents reported variances in their decision-making processes: from group conferences and negotiating among all staff to recommendations made to supervisory manager, to a simple decision made by the person at the top who has decision-making power. While this may all seem the norm, it is important in at least two respects: 1) It serves as a reminder to both WOC and those in mainstream leadership positions that we are living in a digital age, and therefore, it is critical that they familiarize themselves with, and utilize both old and new technologies for recruitment and hiring; and 2) To recognize the value in involving multiple perspectives and techniques which are sensitive to our diverse lived experiences when interviewing new staff.

Correlation Between Formal Education and Promotions to Leadership/Executive Positions

Promotions seemed to be predicated on a number of variables. While some mentioned that "the letters behind your name mean something," (#4, #12) and that they "may hire staff without degrees but not at the management level" (#15), others mentioned how current "staff may be approached" to fill a vacancy (#13), or that "a recommendation from higher up is taken very seriously". (#14) One indicated that promotions were predicated on a staff person's "motivation and willingness to become part of the solution…willing[ness] to provide equal services to all human beings. [That they are] rarely interested even if the person has completed high school and are more interested in their interest in the community". (#16) One interviewee reported that the agency pays for employees to gain

knowledge that will presumably benefit the organization. (#19)

However, interviewees overall reported promoting current staff into higher-level positions as an organizational preference and practice (particularly since many reported having previously been volunteers before becoming employees themselves). And, typically, past performance is a significant determinant as to whether a staff person receives a promotion; there is an assessment (formal or informal) of an employee's readiness to transition to a position with more responsibilities. Where this becomes an issue for WOC is in how past performance has been calculated and documented. Given that several WOC respondents have reported being called "combative", "angry", "too emotional", and other such comments in the course of their work, one can see how these characterizations may negatively influence their performance reviews. Given the confidential nature of employment information, and the fact that respondents occupied executive level positions, this particular issue generated little discussion in depth by any significant number of respondents as it pertained to their own status.

For one respondent, two factors create contradictory mandates within her organization: the unionizing of their non-management level staff (i.e. non-exempt employees); and grant requirements/ restrictions. These institutional factors can significantly impact the hiring and promotion of WOC. The respondent was very clear that "education and experience are weighted equally," as stipulated by their union bylaws. However, it was pointed out that the absence of college degrees and grant requirements for professional staff could

trump union bylaws and create clear institutional barriers for WOC:

> "Education and experience are weighted equally, via the union across the board […] But, the WOC [in the agency] by in large have less education; among the nine direct service staff, eight are WOC; three-quarters of the leadership is white and less than one-fourth of direct service is white. It is harder for WOC to get promoted because when looking at a resume, all things are not equal." (#3)

While unique to this one domestic violence shelter agency, it is nevertheless illustrative of how barriers to WOC advancement into executive level positions can become institutionalized via labor and resources. Therefore, in addition to attitudinal barriers, institutional barriers potentially delay WOC professional advancement, as funders more and more frequently require professional degrees and certificates to hold director/manager positions.

But as a corollary to the relationship between higher education, internal job promotion, and funding requirements, one Latina respondent reported having been promoted to her shelter director position over the white case managers who did not hold Masters degrees because she did have her MSW which was a DHHS requirement for that position. (#7) That said, it appears that higher education can neutralize some attitudinal barriers against WOC seeking advancement in the workplace but does not necessarily level the playing field. For example, another respondent expressed feeling that she had to have a Masters degree in order to compete with white women with Bachelors degrees. (#5) In other words, some WOC expressed that having parallel experience and education with white counterparts is not sufficient to compete;

that WOC still have to achieve higher in order to overcome attitudinal barriers than their white counterparts in competition for the same jobs. This seems to support the earlier expressed sentiment that when looking at resumes, all things are not equal. The information obtained through follow-up interviews is further supported by the survey results noted in the section entitled "Education".

Where vertical advancement was not available, some were innovative and created 'new' jobs laterally, looked to boost cost of living allowances as appreciation for jobs well done. In other cases agencies have such small staffs that there really appears to be no room for advancement or growth. One interesting strategy involved individual professional development accounts. (#6) Each staff person had a small budget to take skills development related trainings as they saw fit. This was part of the annual agency budget and each staff person had an allocation. This appears to be one more way agencies can creatively support the continued learning and growth and leadership development of their staff.

Fiscal Involvement
In general, all of the interviewees are involved in varying degrees in understanding or managing money of the organization. Many expressed not being that versed in budgets and fiscal issues prior to their current positions and had steep learning curves. It was not uncommon for many respondents to express having to go outside of their agencies to receive training around fiscal matters, or having to teach themselves. 'Fiscal involvement' ranges from "not involved much in fiscal matters" to being "asked to put budgets together to give to the ED" to " up to my ears" in fiscal matters (#15, #2)

Several respondents commented on how it was important to them to share information related to budgets and expenditures with (subordinate) staff as a matter of transparency, accountability, and as a way of empowering staff to manage their own projects. (#3, #4, #6, #13, #16) Control over fiscal matters did not reveal itself as an issue with any degree of frequency as a point of struggle with interviewees. Requests for everything from petty cash to supplies appeared to be consistent with standard business practices and internal controls related to fiduciary accountability. However, many of the respondents reported that it was essential for WOC in leadership/executive positions to understand how the money flows as a matter of professional development and being competitive in the workplace. As one interviewee stated, "If you want to talk about power and power sharing, you need to understand the money". (#6)

Mentoring Opportunities
Overall, interviewees believed that mentoring was a positive and valuable factor in supporting WOC in leadership/executive positions. Only a few expressed formal structured mentoring programs within their organizations (#11, #16, #19); others reported that it existed more informally as internal coaching across strata and peer-to-peer. (#3, #7, #13, #14, #17). A few referred to their relationships with internships and volunteers as a form of mentorship, and some referred to participation in opportunities provided by external groups as mentoring (i.e. WOC task forces and caucuses). Still, others expressed that they were not where they would like to be in offering or receiving mentoring and that they were working on it. There seemed to be a broad understanding of what constitutes

"mentoring". It can exist internally among staff in the form of peer-to-peer or management-to-line staff, or externally with colleagues where "coaching" describes much of what happens (i.e. problem solving, trouble shooting, maintaining good counsel). Frequently, various other terms such as "self help", "value supervision", and "coaching" were used alternately with mentoring during this discussion. Still, a few mentioned that there were no formal mentoring opportunities for WOC in their organizations and the resulting perception was that WOC were "dropping like flies" either from quitting their jobs or being terminated from their positions. (#12). The information obtained through follow-up interviews is further supported by the survey results noted in the section entitled "Mentoring".

What this reveals is that mentoring is generally considered valuable and that it appears to happen more frequently on an informal basis than in a formal capacity. It can be likened to the "continuing education" requirements that many professionals are required to complete in order to maintain certification and/or licensure. When viewed in this capacity, and as an incentive to encourage more mentoring, organizations could make the identification and skills development of diverse staff an essential part of managerial skills development. In other words, rather than make cultural diversity a separate (and optional) area of awareness/skill building, make the development of diverse new leaders part of the job description of directors and managers; and make training opportunities in this area available, ongoing, and a measure of their own job performance.

Correlation Between Positive Work Experience And Mentoring

Overall, most respondents saw a correlation between mentoring and improving the quality of their positions as WOC or white allies in leadership/executive positions. Mentoring – formal and informal – was seen not only as a mechanism for advancement but also as an everyday survival strategy for WOC. One interviewee put it, laughing: "Yes, it helps maintain their sanity!" (#5); another respondent pointed out that mentoring in her observation was about "...support and trust and a soft place to land." (#12) Among the majority of interviewees who reported positive perceptions and experiences with mentoring, they believed that mentoring was as much about skills as it was about survival/crisis management.

With these two mentoring thrusts in mind, it became clear that the majority of interviewees who expressed having been mentored, were proactive in seeking out the support or information they needed. What this says is that these WOC were able to recognize when they needed assistance and sought out the appropriate person (or persons; some had up to three coaches) for guidance.

What was of particular interest was the suggestion that WOC will approach other WOC and white women for different needs. A few respondents reported having had different yet equally valuable experiences when receiving mentoring from other WOC compared to white women. For example, several interviewees reported that white mentors were of assistance when pursuing job advancement, or were perceived as being the ones to go to for job related requests:

> "I've been mentored by a couple of white women who have been really great. They ask me 'what do you see as

your next step and how can I help you get there?'" (#13)

"I went to the previous ED (white woman) and expressed interest [in her position]. The previous ED immediately began mentoring me and made space for [me] to step into that position." (#11)

One obvious explanation for this is the notion that there are simply more white women in leadership/executive positions thus establishing white women as the default mentor most readily available. Conversely, WOC expressed that they turned to other WOC for guidance in matters of conflict with coworkers, colleagues, or dealing with cultural/race issues:

"So [as a WOC], on cultural issues, I'm seen as having more authority or power; but when it is other "work" related skills or issues, white women are seen as more [appropriate]." (#7)

Other interviewees expressed that their experiences with other WOC mentors/coaches provided emotional support, nurturing and counseling in an effort to manage work related crises. This observation is further supported by work presented in 2009 by the WOCN to DHHS on WOC experiences with racism in the anti-violence against women field; particularly how WOC turn to other WOC when confronted with "program abuse" whereby personnel related factors (i.e. job descriptions and announcements, planning meetings, etc.) are used as a strategy for isolating or marginalizing WOC in their positions. Further, white allies express awareness on the part of white leadership to deny mentoring and leadership development

at all, but particularly WOC, for fear of losing power:

"Overall I see a lack of leadership of WOC [as] they are often tokenized. In general, people in positions of power – regardless of their race – they're not willing to give that up or share it with anyone. [There are] very high levels of institutional racism that goes unacknowledged." (#14)

Nevertheless, some WOC interviewees expressed positive experiences as recipients of mentoring and as mentors. One WOC discussed how she mentored a young African American woman who went on to later win a very prestigious and well-funded fellowship:

"I met her when she was just starting to work as a street worker. When she was hired on I saw potential in her at the street survival project; she eventually became the ED. When the [fellowship] called me I thought they were calling about her going back to school…low and behold, she *wins* a [fellowship]! That was great and I've never begrudged it for one minute. What she's doing has way surpassed anything I've ever done…I'd like to have more opportunities like that. I'm very proud of [her] – I just answered questions and helped where I could. And I am very proud of my association with her." (#10)

Clearly, there is no way to tell what heights of achievement await WOC when they receive the right coaching from the right people regardless of race. However, frequently, it is the day-to-day "schooling" that elder WOC provide younger WOC that keeps the junior advocates and activists in the game:

"I had an African American staff and I felt it was important to mentor her because I saw how her actions were misinterpreted by whites…as anger, or not being cooperative…very bright, with fantastic problem solving ability; however, her style of communication was perceived by whites as argumentative…I worked with her on how to move up [because] 'people interpret what you do as attitude.' With another worker, she was good, but didn't always follow through; she was always thinking with her brain but not connecting with the heart. I tried to give her examples and ways to think about [her work] differently…I felt that as a 'mentor' I could help them [both] see things differently as a strategy for moving up in their fields. I called it coaching, not mentoring…teaching them how to "fish" so that they could reap the benefits of their work. If I hadn't, there would have definitely been problems because the higher ups wouldn't have thought about them the way I did…[the higher ups] didn't get to know the person or think that everyone was valuable. And some of [their distancing] to me was because they were black. Everything in my gut said that they were afraid of [one] woman – like she was gonna pull a knife out! There are tough white women but no one thinks they're gonna pull a knife, that they're rude, or not capable." (#4)

This particular example is more typical of WOC experience as both the mentor and the mentee. It demonstrates just how valuable experiences cultural insiders are in being able to assess a situation and redirect behaviors expressed by less seasoned young WOC who's professionalism and

comportment may be misread or misinterpreted by others. Other benefits from WOC-to-WOC mentoring is the cultural benefit of being mentored by another woman who looks like them allows for WOC to be "authentic" and not have to explain themselves or their experience. (#18) This could also be explained by an unwillingness to expose one's vulnerabilities to white women in the workplace for fear of repercussions or denial of any occurrence of biased or discriminatory treatment. In other words, a barrier to inter-cultural mentoring may be the fear of exposing levels of what they don't know (i.e. skills, content, capacity, etc.) which speaks to an issue of trust.

That being said, it is important to recognize the impact coaching young or inexperienced WOC can have on more seasoned WOC who expressed feeling overwhelmed and symptoms of vicarious trauma of their own. A few WOC interviewees discussed how it was important for them to maintain appropriate boundaries when coaching young WOC because their needs can be so great and either woman may be a survivor of violence and/or oppression herself:

"One thing that happens is that WOC want to mentor other WOC but are overwhelmed with day-to-day survival, that mentoring is a job in itself. For example, at the conference there was a young woman who was in some little town and out there; she had her own issues related to her own victimization, her family, and the work. She needed five mentors but whom do you trust to allow to come in and assist you to manage your life? If she needs to have a conversation with a mother figure she can call me but I can't get into her other stuff. I have to maintain boundaries and I can't get into her work stuff…I don't

want to do anything that's going to take away from a 'mothering' role by talking about work stuff." (#21)

This comment speaks to the multifaceted role WOC play in the anti-violence against women field in comparison to white women: as staff, supervisors, coaches, advocates, and activists against racism, not to mention how all of this may impact or be impacted by their own personal lives. Nevertheless, many interviewees expressed an expectation that WOC will aid other WOC in navigating rough work related terrain, and obligation to meet that need:

"Women of color are so stretched, that it is difficult to have an organized mentoring experience. [Therefore] I sought out mentoring with many WOC who took me under their wings. We have a responsibility to talk, create access for each other. Informal mentoring made me feel like I wasn't going crazy; it validated my experiences, passed on knowledge and history, gave me access to information, etc. It's good to have a group of people to think things through with, to strategize with and have access to create my own network." (#17)

As previously mentioned, development of future leadership is something that can be expected of any executive level/leadership position as part of regular job duties. Some white allies have already built this expectation into the executive level positions (Q. 11, #2, Q 4, #6) which suggests that from the beginning women in executive level positions should plan to develop skills, leadership and share power. One interviewee poignantly and with all due respect, reported the impact of what this looks like when white women in power do not engage WOC:

"I recently went to a funeral [of a white woman leader in the movement]…the room was packed; people were there from all over [the country]; and there were no other women of color in the room! That speaks volumes as to who she was. But more [germane], it speaks to how important mentoring is and the future of the movement." (#12)

For this interviewee, it was almost unfathomable that this well respected and widely known white leader could have gone her entire career and not passed on any of the wealth of her knowledge to WOC. For all women in positions of power, this speaks to the notion of legacy: what will your impact be upon the movement when you leave?

Correlation Between Commitment Statements and WOC Leadership

The majority of respondents felt that having language which serves as a statement of intention expressed in their mission statements (as well as statements of values, principles, purpose, etc.) was one for constituents (which concludes staff, volunteers and colleagues) and the larger field to hold an organization accountable for what it does and for which says it stands. Some interviewees were able to identify circumstances where having expressed commitments to diversity, ending oppression, etc., lead to proactive placement of WOC in executive/leadership positions (#5). Some saw the ideological value of including this language as a mode of communication that articulates who they are what they stand for in ways that were both inclusive and exclusive. For example, the absence of such language may communicate to communities of color that they are not welcome at that organization, or for one respondent, it may conjure up negative

historical experiences of people of color with the women's movement: "if wording is not out in front, if marketing materials are homogenous, the clients and potential staff of color do not see a connection to them, [they'll think] 'that's just one of those white feminist organizations'." #18 Conversely, many interviewees acknowledged that some agencies do not include this type of purpose statement in their missions and other promotional/programmatic collateral, yet strive to be inclusive of diverse populations: "the explicitness tells folks of color that there is at least an attempt to create a discrimination free place, and that they do not have to hide. (#3)

Related to this point, was how some saw these statements as a way to connect anti-violence against women work to the movement for social justice; failure to recognize the intersections between racism and sexism has at least two detrimental effects related to ideology: 1) the lack of connection to some degree continues to frame sexual assault/domestic violence singular acts that happen to individuals and masks its function as a systemic, institutional, and societal manifestation of patriarchy and sexism; and 2) misses opportunities to build coalitions across struggles as failure to see how it intersects with other socio-political justice issues, contributes to the absence of equality and justice within the agency. In the words of one respondent: "It also connects it to other social justice agencies and makes them connect to the anti-violence issues. Each movement has to recognize the value and struggle of the other movements". (#9) Finally, and perhaps more germane to this discussion, failure to acknowledge the intersections of various forms of oppression with something as assimilable as a

commitment statements is an inherent reflection of WOC staff within the organization:

> "I see the correlation. The difference is when that language is there, WOC are offered positions other than entry level. From what I've seen and experienced myself. When agencies don't see issues of race and class as intersections, then there are no women of color in management positions. I started looking around for other WOC at ED positions and there weren't [many]." (#5)

However, as was expected, a majority of respondents while optimistic, were quick to point out how words on the page are simply that and spoke admonishingly about how words without actions are not really worth the paper that they're printed on:

> "Of course, in an organization that is really walking the talk, they're going to be intentional and have those things laid out. But just because you have them there, doesn't mean you're doing it." #6

> "No, not at all. It's a good stand, but unfortunately many organizations (take into account the political system) particularly in the social services, if you say you're going to serve 'everyone' that will bring you a lot of support and money. [Our state] has a huge refugee community but that doesn't mean that your organization is promoting and embracing that [commitment to diversity/anti-oppression] value. Many organizations have in their mission statements… that they value cultural competency, etc. But, when you go in they do not reflect that with their staff, etc. If you really want to reflect what your mission statement says, you need to

bring that population into the organization. And it must come from the leadership." (#7)

"I've heard a lot of talk but haven't seen people do the walk. White women leaders are afraid of conflict." (#17)

"No correlations. If racism is a part of the culture, it's not going to make a difference; words are just words; just BS." (#14)

A few respondents pointed to the connection between these commitment statements and how an organization walks its talk – or rather, *who* within the organization practices what they preach:

"It depends on the leader and [board of directors]. You can make statements and not practice it. Leaders have the ability to sabotage. For example, when short staffed, they can say they can't send WOC to WOC meetings." (#15)

"Yes but that changed. Our organization underwent a 'rebranding,' which resulted in a change of the mission statement. The previous mission statement articulated a commitment to developing leadership, however when it changed it became more generalized and the organization lost its commitment to WOC leadership. These statements and the accompanying commitment have now been completely removed." (#20)

The conclusion here is that it is ultimately up to the leadership within a given agency to embody and promote these ideals. Without systemic integration – programs, services, staff, volunteers, boards, community partners, clients, etc. – the "commitment" can be null and void.

Nevertheless, when discussing accountability measures, ways of promoting an

organization as well as articulating what an agency stands for, many thought it was a good start.

Correlation Between BoD Composition and WOC Leadership

Continuing the discussion related to leadership, half of the interviewers believed that there is a correlation between an organization's board of directors (BoD) and their commitment to WOC leadership. The relationship is assumed to be more of an associative one (via connection) versus a causal one (i.e. because of this, that happened). The discussion of this correlation concedes a few assumptions: 1) The notion that a more ethnically or otherwise diverse board will yield a more diverse staff; 2) That a BoD should be reflective of its constituents/ community; and 3) That if one is a member of a particular affinity group, that they will act representatively (i.e. proactively speaks to the concerns of an affiliated group). Accordingly, the complexity of responses from interviewees makes problematic all of these assumptions. That is to say, the assumptions are not so much negated; but rather they reveal deeper systemic, institutional, and ideological factors that impact this correlation, reminding us that organizations are driven and run by people.

Members of dominate/mainstream cultures can and frequently do advocate as allies for those that are marginalized and underrepresented (#14); but this allegiance sometimes come with a cost. (#5) In general, respondents that supported the notion that BoDs that reflected an organization's constituents, were valuable cultural insiders who "get it". This suggests a belief that a more "representative" or "diverse" BoD fosters an organizational environment where there is a greater acceptance and

understanding of differences, which creates space and perhaps even promotes WOC leadership opportunities. For example:

> "Absolutely there is a correlation. [Our] BOD has almost always been all white. A representative BoD "gets it" in a totally different way. A gay male recently brought the issue of mentoring WOC to the board. It makes a huge difference." (#11)

> "Originally the board was made up of staff and volunteers – very feminist driven group. Difficult to feel included in decisions being made by white middle class women. Then we changed the board to be reflective of clients being served (i.e. faith, lesbians, etc.) and now they are more open. And now the BoD supports me more in who I hire; they don't ask questions as to whether the person has a high school diploma vs. a masters; they don't question as much and support her." (#16)

The downside of the 'burden of representation' in this field assumes that members of certain groups are expected to "represent" or fight for certain issues related to equality and justice, thereby alleviating those that are members of the dominant culture/mainstream of any responsibility to do this work. This lets advocates 'off of the hook' when it comes to being intentional and proactive in many areas including the promotion of WOC into leadership/executive positions. As one respondent exclaimed, "I often cry and look around and wonder why isn't anybody else impacted the way I am about things that happen. I speak the truth." (#11) At the very least, there is a perception that BoDs that do not reflect the diverse communities that their organization's serve, continue to marginalize or make invisible disenfranchised populations:

> "If the BoD is all white, then there isn't even a thought about who we bring to the table. I have witnessed that there is no recognition of the needs of the people of color, or even the need to bring diverse groups to the table, or worse, that we even exist." (#18)

> "Yes. WOC leadership has been invisible and hasn't been on their [BoD] map. It depends on who is there on the BoD. (#17)

"Absolutely, when the BoD is primarily white, they seem to have very little commitment to WOC leadership development. I've noticed that we only see a commitment when there are representatives who are reflective of the communities served." (#20)

While one respondent suggested that the correlation is not relevant because of how "elements of white supremacist culture are embedded into institutions" and therefore it is the institutions that must change, others feel that for an agency to operate with integrity and "walk their talk" it really boils down to not just the composition of the BoD, but how much of their "own internal [anti-oppression] work" has been done. (#9)

For an ideal situation to exist, what kinds of policies need to be in place?
Recognizing that in an ideal world, none of these services would be needed, respondents envisioned an ideal professional experience in this field as one where all women (and by extension men) could do this work as equals and be valued; and where anyone could approach any organization and be served. Ideologically, one respondent suggested this would include an "effort to look through an anti-oppression lens through which we view all that we do". (#6) In

practice some suggestions to move the field in this direction include:

- diverse leadership
- white people committed to "doing this work";
- creativity and flexibility in job development;
- reward volunteering elsewhere as professional development;
- paring senior women/men in this field with newer staff; and
- viewing individual staff for their potential given the right environment.

Policies and practices, which would move organizations in this direction, include:

- Creating and setting standards for achieving diversity and respect;
- Institutional/organizational support for individuals to meet with infinity groups for skills building and support;
- Intensive training for EDs and agency leaders that is tied to their job descriptions and performance reviews;
- Regularly scheduled organizational retreats which address this goal for BoDs and staff;
- Building solidarity with other movements and struggles to be mutually supportive and beneficial;
- More conferences like Incite!;
- 360 performance evaluations;
- More communication networks
- Regular staff training which continually stimulates awareness;
- Incorporate language, which speaks to commitment to this issue into all organization literature (i.e. mission, brochures, annual reports, etc.);
- Creation of some type of objective scale to measure success in this area (not quotas)

While some of these suggestions are more easily assimilated into an organization (i.e. regularly scheduled retreats), others may appear more controversial (i.e. ED's commitment to diversity tied to their job description; 360 performance evaluations), none of these suggestions is particularly cost prohibitive. This suggests that changes are more a matter of having the will and courage of convictions than budgetary.

Experience of Racism Among Colleagues/Peers

Tolerance for Racial Bias

Racial bias is not limited to individual organizations or the larger field. WOC are also confronted with pervasive, subtle forms of racism when their work requires that they network and collaborate with others outside of the field. From interviewees responses, the WOC experience is such that there develops an intuitiveness to discerning subtle expressions of race based bias; that is, there is an awareness of how they are perceived by others based on race; a reflection of what they 'represent' to others. For example, one respondent spoke of attending professional community meetings (i.e. chambers of commerce, rotary, etc.) where when introducing herself, she would be met with the exclamation "oh you're the new ED!" In some instances, people who knew her when she worked in lower level positions could be heard making this statement. For this respondent, who assumes that "we're supposed to have mobility in our careers but they were surprised when I would have it," instances like this speak to an expectation that women of color can hold some positions but not others: "they were ok with me when I was a counselor; I never had that reaction in those other positions. So why am I getting that reaction in this position?" In another

instance, an interviewee was told, "you're not like the other Mexicans." For this respondent, in her analysis, this comment pointed to her own level of class privilege but in the larger context, it speaks to the stereotypes associated with particular affinity groups. Coupled with the dearth of WOC in executive level positions, reports of such expressions indicate that it is not the normative expectation of colleagues for WOC to occupy high-level positions.[1]

Many of the interviewees echoed these experiences that appear to be pervasive, and committed so casually, that the field has developed a 'tolerance' of racial bias; it has become the norm (read: commonplace, accepted) in a field where the dominant culture race is white. Other white allies see this tolerance for racial bias as part of the larger fabric of racism that permeates all facets of society: "[It's] mostly subtle, veiled, northeastern style racism. Like with the child welfare department [where] white women come together to take away a black woman's kids…." (#6) For many of the white allies in the movement, the tolerance for racial bias speaks to the leadership void within the movement:

> "Sometimes it was appropriate for the white leaders to confront other white leaders…Leaders must have a consciousness about how race functions in the work we do; [that] colorblind thing is bullshit! But we must have an analysis and the skills to address it. Otherwise we will keep perpetuating injustice. You can't just say 'I'm going be

a good person and the world will be a better place.' That's worse than naïve because that implies [there is] no harm. If you have that colorblind attitude, what you're doing is wearing blinders; you don't see race you don't see the injustice, which allows it to be perpetuated." (#6)

The field's tolerance for the race bias experienced by WOC and witnessed by white allies has its repercussions. Frequently, WOC describe the impact of their experience as one where they:

- Are made to feel "invisible," or like a "token" or "outsider";
- Are met with group silence at professional meetings when asserting issues of race or class;
- Are met with off-handed dismissals which devalue cultural tradition and expression ("hope we're not going to have any drumming thing");
- Detect veiled racial bias couched in performance related comments ("you don't meet my level of expectation," "lack skills," "lack education"); and
- How subtle forms of race bias creep into the policies and procedures for operating programs for clients. As reported by one interviewee:

"Black women wanted to buy their own grooming products but the shelters insisted that they use shared products. When the black women got stuff, they were accused of bringing in contraband. Or, the black and Latina women wanted to cook for everybody because they wanted to eat something that they wanted to eat. Shelters said "no" so then I said the shelter had to teach their cooks to make multi-cultural cuisine. [One state] has the highest [particular

[1] While it is true that a woman who is representative of dominant culture may have a similar encounter, one must consider the context in which she has been racialized and empowered (e.g. a white ED at a domestic violence shelter for Latinas).

immigrant] population in the country. These children went to school but the children were never prepared for this [by the shelter]; culture shock!" (#21)

While a certain degree of workplace conflict is common or typical, respondents were able to articulate situations that they perceive to be indications of race bias but are typically not overtly stated.

Although interviewees were asked about their experience of racism from external sources, many took this opportunity to share experiences from within their organizations, painting a more comprehensive picture of how racial bias and discrimination impacts their lives.

Frequently, interviewees discussed having experiences, which, in their observation, their white colleagues have not had to go through. White respondents have reported similar observations and have expressed intervening where appropriate.[2] Some examples of what appears to WOC as race based bias include the second guessing of judgment and decision-making, suspicion around time spent out of the office, suspicion or hostility exhibited toward WOC having conversations in the office in languages other than English, etc. A few WOC pointed to how their experience of racism can lead to a lack of trust or bias toward coworkers, isolation, high rates of turn over and burnout. The information obtained through follow-up interviews is further supported by the survey results noted in the section entitled "Discrimination in the Workplace", see graphs on 1)

[2] This hesitation to intervene on the part of white allies appears to be tempered by a desire to not seem paternalistic toward WOC, and a conscious desire to aid WOC in a manner in which best exemplifies being an ally.

Treatment of White Women in Comparison to their Women of Color Counterparts; and 2) Consequences of ethnic or race-related bias and survey respondent comments on: Cultural Ignorance, Stereotyping, Glass Ceiling, marginalization, surveillance, silencing or exclusion.

In addition to negatively impacting the health and wellbeing of WOC, there are at least two additional consequences that emerge as a result of the field's high tolerance for race bias relevant to this discussion. First, it appears that white leadership is unaware of, or unconcerned with how this reflects upon their organizations and the quality of their service provision. Looking at the racial composition of the BoD, staff, volunteers and client base provides one version of an organization's commitment to diversity; high rates of turnover among WOC staff and volunteers, says something about the agency. Problematic on multiple levels, the impact of this lack of awareness or concern for how they are perceived is antithetical to what many consider to be one of the foundational principles for grassroots organizations: to be of, by, and for the community. Additionally, it is an indication of a lack of commitment to improving the quality of life of diverse groups and WOC staff. Secondly, and perhaps more germane to this discussion, is the perception that white leadership is unaware or unconcerned with how they are *active participants* in perpetuating the tolerance for race bias.

Old Girl Network

Looking at staffing ratios and turnover rates provides a way to quantify racial bias on one level; however, things become more difficult when attempting to document and remedy apathetic attitudes exhibited by mainstream leadership toward WOC advancement (which

in turn, calls into question mainstream commitment to serving communities of color). This apathy can in many instances take on the appearance of ignorance, detachment, or blatant disregard among white/mainstream leadership. This is suggested by comments from many of the WOC and white interviewees who expressed frustration over not being able to make a difference among their white colleagues; or, an inability to penetrate what they coined "founding mothers syndrome" and an "old girls network". This characterization is marked as a generation of middle class, older white female leadership that has been active in the sexual assault and domestic violence fields for decades. They have been described as women who are perhaps representative of what has historically been problematic in the feminist movement for diverse communities: a privileging of the needs of white women over the varied concerns of people of color:

"I really felt like there were a lot of issues within this movement that added strain to racial divides and racism. There were women I did encounter who would say things without being aware of it being racist or prejudicial...Many of these women have been around for 20-30 years and were totally insensitive – for them it's pretty matter of fact." (#4)

"[Leadership is] mostly white women who are 50-plus years old, and have been in the movement for 30 years. I have to get up earlier, jump higher, to be the same as a white woman; WOC have to straddle all sorts of worlds." (#12)

"Having been through the movement and all its permutations in [urban, northeastern city] and still seeing the same old players in positions of power after having gone through a million antiracism conferences, you find the same old girls network and all of those [diversity] policies are in place in many of those agencies. I don't know if it has made much of a dent." (#9)

"My organization has been in existence since 1970, [and] we've had a white ED. She is just now becoming receptive to the statements from WOC; I find it amazing that this organization is just now coming around." (#18)

"Until the movement acknowledges that it was created for white women, we won't see change." (#14)

With this longevity of leadership comes a concentration of power in the hands of a few women at the top and in effect, assures that power remains in the hands of white women via the circulation of information, sharing of resources, solutions and strategies, and their hiring and promotion practices. With people of color advancing in other professions and a growing collective ethnic majority, one has to wonder how certain women in the sexual assault and domestic violence field – whether real or perceived – have been able to retain such a lock on the top positions. Having dispensed with the notion that there just are no "qualified applicants," one has to conclude that there is some degree of advantage that mainstream leadership provides to other white women.

A dimension of the white, 'old girl' network, assumes a commonality in thought as a condition of entre and eventual membership. While a few of the white respondents report having witnessed white colleagues acting out in racially biased ways, equally revealing are the sentiments they report having heard white colleagues express

when in all white settings such as "I think she's going to get the job because she's black," or "she got promoted because she's black". There exists then the possibility that white women in this field are exposed to varying degrees of racially biased sentiments and attitudes more frequently than their WOC counterparts because of the perception that it is a 'safe space' to do so. There are several implications of such sentiments traveling in an 'old girl' network: 1) It is difficult to see how such attitudes would not filter into the daily decision-making of mainstream leadership as it relates to the advancement of WOC in the field; and 2) That young white feminists/advocates new to the movement have seeds of prejudice/bias planted or nourished by the old guard leadership ("it's ok to be biased against certain groups") instead of being developed as potential allies for anti-oppression.

Like all situations with cultural insiders, one can conclude that there is a 'knowing' and understanding of lived experience that goes with saying; a sharing of strategies, tips, and information; and leniencies which allow insiders to overlook the mistakes of other insiders but may not be provided to outsiders. A clear distinction among all of the cultural insiders previously discussed herein, is that support and service made among those with power produces more power. The evidence of this is the lack of WOC advancement to executive level positions in the presence of an entrenched white/mainstream leadership. The information obtained through follow-up interviews is further supported by the survey results noted in the section entitled "Organizational Information" see graph on number of years with organization.

Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression/Ally-Building Training Correlation with WOC Leadership

When looking across the range of responses, respondents were ambivalent toward anti-racism training citing varied determinants (i.e. content, style, approach, content, implementation, etc.), lack of accountability, and a general lack of measurable outcomes. Despite the general lack of enthusiasm toward these trainings, interviewees were unwilling to abandon education and training as a strategy for eliminating racism in the field. For the majority of them, it was a question of effectiveness:

"If we train WOC on racism and its effects it has a huge impact. I'm not really sure what the impact is if we train white women because I've heard them say "I got the training; I'm not a racist." So I think it's important, but I question its effectiveness." (#11)

"My initial thought is that the people that need to "get it" never do; people think that they are not racist just because they attended a training. I've heard white people at my organization make statements like "well we work with people who are oppressed all of the time; I don't really see why we need to go to training." Training alone doesn't work that well, it has to be attached to other pieces. Traditional training can allow white women who believe themselves to be allies, to go unchallenged and not recognize when they are being oppressive." (#20)

Some were able to make the theoretical connection between implementing anti-racism efforts as a strategy toward elevating WOC to executive level positions as exemplified by the following:

"I think anytime you do anti-racism training its helpful in raising awareness of how racism impacts staff, program services, and organizational culture. I'm not sure of its direct impact on WOC leadership though. I can see where it may increase the likelihood that professional development opportunities may be directed towards WOC on staff; and that can be a positive. Also, when you are doing anti-racism work in an organization, it may be one of the few times where the voices of WOC are listened to or elevated, and in a way that may be empowering for WOC at the moment." (#13)

However, this respondent went on to express her concerns about the safety of WOC when participating in anti-racism efforts with white people in a multiethnic setting:

"I do worry though that WOC take a huge, huge risk in openly participating in anti-racism work. When WOC disclose the racism they have experience within the movement, they leave themselves open to being targeted, discredited, and even terminated in the future. That concerns me a lot. The level of risk for WOC in engaging in the anti-racism work is much greater than it is for white women; [there is] a level of disappointment or disillusionment in the movement when…things don't really change afterwards. We all know WOC that have left the work for this very reason. So, I have mixed thoughts on whether anti-racism work is beneficial for WOC leadership in the long run. I do still [believe] anti-racism work is essential, because of the impact of the women and families our

programs serve - this is where the impact on WOC survivors is more positive." (#13)

For respondents to report that they see a positive impact upon communities as a result of anti-racism training is a positive sign for the field. The traditional focus of anti-racism work has been directed primarily at improving the access to, and quality of services for clients, which speaks to the continued efforts of centers to be 'culturally competent,' 'cultural sensitivity,' and 'diverse.' However, it is important to note that the impetus for this change does not necessarily come from a commitment to ending racism, but from funding sources, the majority of which is governmental. Despite organizations ability to make these strides with clients, it does not appear that this awareness has necessarily translated into the removal of internal barriers to executive level positions or racial bias experienced by WOC.

Some respondents pointed to how the use of language and a larger social justice context removes some of the discomfort of anti-racism training, which theoretically allows mainstream leadership to see the part that they play:

"I think that anti-racism training can at times be very detrimental to WOC leadership. Due to the many levels of stratification, I think that "anti-oppression" makes more sense. Sadly, I believe anti-oppression terminology is a more "palatable" subject matter for many mainstream organizations. While it might appear to be a back door entrance it provides opportunities for more meaningful dialog on many different levels. Anti- racism training often singles [WOC] out based on the

assumptions and perceptions of the racial composition of the work place." (#18)

Interviewees frequently spoke with more hopefulness about the notion of ally-building: a concept where those with power develop the skills and capacity to function as advocates for the "have nots" in an effort to create an environment where there is a sharing or equalizing of power; where people act with an intentionality to interrupt and dismantle oppression and its effects, in the service of the greater good. Ally-building is conceptually intended to develop the necessary muscles for participants to take action. Rather than wait for an incident of bias or prejudice to occur and then take action, some interviewees suggested that allies be pro-active and create opportunities to foster equity and justice. However, for long term change to occur, first, one has to acknowledge how they have been impacted and benefited from social inequity:

> "I'm trying to work with white leaders to support WOC leadership, create safe spaces, time and resources available, etc., and also insist that white aspiring allies need to do our work together. A big piece of the problem is white folks don't even know the ways in which we are impeding the process of WOC leadership development. We're so far behind impacted by racism [and] how we sustain institutional racism." (#6)

Second, **ally-building** has to be part of the structure and fabric of an organization with accountability and outcomes:

> "We do need to be explicit to all supervisors about intervening and helping staff in experiencing or witnessing bias; we need to institutionalize it. [They go through]

sexual harassment training; can this be done for racism? These are good people who want to be part of the solution; they don't know how." (#3)

Third, ally-building is an active process that is at times uncomfortable but nevertheless must be embraced and lived:

> "Allies need to be doing something; challenge the status quo and put together institutes about white women who create barriers for women of color….This ally building thing – allies need to step it up a notch…[They] can do a lot more. They can hold each other accountable. We have to do good ally work but that means strategic plan to use our privilege to serve ally-ship. Acknowledge and support allies for doing the right thing. Allies have to be able to sit in a room and take it – it's hard work and some white women don't have the spine for that part of the work." (#4)

Some remain skeptical of how the field has managed this aspect of anti-violence against women's work – or question if the leadership even really sees anti-racism, anti-oppression, and ally-building as part of doing anti-violence against women's work.

For some of the respondents, this issue is no longer about asking the majority white leadership in the field to make room for WOC; it has become about holding the mainstream leadership accountable to issues of social justice to *all* members of the community which *includes* WOC staff; while simultaneously redirecting WOC of energy toward growing WOC leadership independent of the larger field:

"We have had conversations and they know how we feel about things. We've given them all they need to know including drawing pictures. Now women of color need to pull back and focus on building our own capacity. We can't sit back and wait for change. We can be the catalyst of change, alter our thinking, take the risk and do it anyway, build networks and net-worth to progress and be successful. We would be a force to be reckoned with. White women would be forced to change and our allies would be supporting that." (#18)

"The field hasn't done a very good job of doing this on its own…as a result, [WOC] had to create our own institutions… There's going to be a certain level of resistance based on making it a policy remedy, but that may be one way to make folks get off the dime. If you're thoughtful about it, people will resent it but they will do it…. I feel like everybody should be able to be served." (#2)

The efficacy of anti-racism training remains in question on some level because much of the leadership in the field sees themselves as part of the solution, not part of the problem; or they do not have a broader context for anti- violence against women work which situates it in a social justice context; or, they are just not invested in changing the status quo.

However, many interviewees are not interested in giving up on education as a strategy for change. Given the their insight, it seems that an ally-building approach which clearly articulates skills building and being a catalyst for change and social justice should include an analysis of the intersectionality of oppression and specifically how racism manifests itself within the field.

In general, survivors who grow distrustful of men due to abusive experiences are encouraged to actively participate in their healing and future well being, by identifying and asserting their needs and reclaiming their power. Similarly, WOC who have grown to distrust white leadership based on injurious, real world experiences, can also actively create a new experiences particularly as it relates to working with white allies. Frequently, however, this distrust (based on real experiences) makes many of these opportunities untenable. Therefore, where apathetic attitudes, a tolerance for racial bias, and various degrees of discrimination are concerned, it is incumbent upon white allies, in partnership with WOC, to work with the unaware white leadership to undo bias.

Mechanisms for Accountability

As one interviewee previously stated, "the field hasn't done a very good job of doing this on its own" referring to combating race bias and racism as a barrier to an obstacle to WOC leadership within the field. Accountability measures intended to provide a mechanism of checks and balance, as well a mode of recourse in increasing WOC leadership and presence in executive level positions, was overall a welcomed notion.

"Accountability of the field should be a focus absolutely! Clear quantifiable ways to measure – like 10% of your management staff WOC; agencies need to look at their communities; entry level positions only for WOC is not ok; people need to see themselves reflected at all levels." (#2)

"No where near enough accountability. I think that stuff is really interesting. I think we're in the beginning of dialoguing about this. I'm sure there is a downside to having funders require it, but I think people need to be held accountable. People don't do it because it's the right thing to do, because we'd be doing it. It's a very important question. I hate the idea of laws, regulations, and rules, but when it comes to older, middle class white women (of which I am one) we don't seem to be doing a very good job of passing the torch. We don't hold ourselves accountable." (#6)

As evidenced by the above quote, and those below, many of the interviewees felt that power without accountability was a problem; but there was ambivalence toward governmental type impositions and mandates, such as quotas. And, if there were government mandates, interviewees anticipated the challenges associated with enforcing such mandates:

"The worst offenders are people at my level [i.e. EDs]. They go to a training, are moved, etc., and think they've arrived. It's not a constant, deliberate thing. In their quarterly reports, they should be asked to provide examples of where they have dealt with this. And who holds the coalition accountable? In this day it's still voluntary to do the right thing around oppression. Outside of being sued, its optional. I don't know how we change that, but the only folks who have the power are funders; it has to be tied to money!" (#3)

"The funding sources don't monitor it and there is no protocol; nor is there a systemic way to do it. Lets say if the HHS asks about complaints of bias, I answer it yes or no, but how do they know?" (#7)

Respondents were disappointed that the field does not do a very good job of 'policing' itself around this issue and several interviewees suggested tying increasing WOC leadership and ally-building work to the mainstream leadership's performance measures (i.e. as managers and directors) and to their funding. Without external motivation, there is little confidence that the mainstream/white leadership would move to change the status quo:

"I'm not aware of mechanisms of accountability that are in place with any of the domestic violence programs in our state. I know a consultant we worked with suggested that we create a community link [where] WOC survivors that have gone through our programs evaluate us when they leave and suggest program changes to us based on their experiences.

The problem lies in the next step. What if we collect the feedback, so what? Without the ability to enforce those changes, I don't believe those changes would happen in our programs unless we could "hold them accountable" in some way. The only way that comes to mind is through withholding funding, and that's a pipe dream." (#13)

One strategy has been for the leadership at organizations to work in partnership with the funding agencies to encourage the funders to require their grantees to integrate multicultural and diversity strategies into their services. This is best accomplished when there is mutual respect and an understanding between the two entities that it is in the best interest of the field to make these kinds of programmatic requirements:

"I also asked that state and federal grant managers put language in their grants to encourage [use tribal resources for services] and then ask how, where, and when the [other grantees] are doing their collaboration in their programming." (#19)

Not only do these types of creative strategies tied to funding require programmatic mandates of multiethnic inclusion for service provision, but it also fosters greater accountability among service providers at the community level. Agencies can keep each other 'honest' as a matter of professional courtesy and commitment to excellence in serving and reaching as wide a swath of the community as possible.

Final Thoughts & Overall Experience

In addition to the incalculable number of challenges associated with doing this work, with regard to this discussion, is the overwhelming sense of unfairness exacted by women upon women; that in a field that is supposed to be about empowering and improving the quality of life of women, that there was great disillusionment in learning that "every sister ain't your sister." This was apparent in respondents' comments about disappointment, lack of trust, and an air of suspicion. Additionally, many of the interviewees spoke of how difficult it was watching other WOC become discredited after years of service; that the experience of racism – which white women generally don't experience in general – could be so entrenched and invisible to white women particularly by those who adopt a "color blind" ideology; all of the negative assumptions.

Many WOC have thrust upon them because of their racial status; and a lack of analysis as to how race, class and immigration status

and other factors influence how services should be provided with the utmost consideration as to how these factors collide, conflict, or converge in the process of service delivery.

Finally, many of the interviewees expressed their frustration at what they perceive as an evacuation of a social justice ethos from the movement leading many of the respondents to claim that there is "no movement in the movement." A majority of the participants attributed this to a disconnection from its historical grassroots origins (a connection to history is critical to guiding the future), toward a professionalization, which can be seen in the increased demand for degreed and credentialed personnel; and a trend toward evidence based programming. Both of which are typically driven or tied to funding. Ancillary to this, other respondents pointed to how funding also creates divisiveness among service providers which at times promotes healthy collegial competition but mostly creates animosity among sister and allied agencies.

"I love my job!" was the response from one of the interviewees when asked about her overall experience; and overall, respondents expressed generally positive feelings about their experience working in the anti-violence against women arena. They spoke graciously about what they have learned over the years, and with enthusiasm about the positive impact and contributions they feel that they have to individuals and communities over the years. Many spoke of how this work was transformative and life changing for them; were able to identify areas of both professional and personal growth; how they have been able to contribute to the skills development and growth for their staff; and were grateful for

the collegial connections and friendships
acquired over the years.

Recommendations

Recommendations herein seek to create change in measureable outcomes impacting women of color in the anti-violence against women field and by extension, service populations. With changes in norms, the following is not intended to be an exhaustive list; but rather an attempt to triangulate areas for impact where change can be measured.

Accountability

WOCN can look toward creating and informing the field of accountability measures to be adopted and implemented by mainstream organizations for reducing bias and promoting WOC leadership. Areas of accountability can be in attitudinal, structural, and ideological change. In addition to codifying language, suggested incentives include accountability in funding and performance reviews.

Recommendations for effecting attitudinal, structural and ideological changes in <u>accountability</u> include:

1. Individual centers/agencies, Tribal programs and coalitions expressly state in writing their commitment toward justice, equity, anti-oppression, etc., in guiding principles and documents for service to constituents, volunteers (including BoD), and staff.
2. Evaluate organization/program mission, goals, etc., for connections to larger social justice issues (i.e. intersections of feminism and oppression). Establish a quantifiable number of relationships (professional, collegial, collaborative, etc.) with social justice organizations and create opportunities to work together on common goals. Integrate social justice questions into interviews of potential new hires.
3. Review existing policies, protocols, and procedures for opportunities to: include language and/or practices that promotes inclusivity and demonstrate cultural competency; and, excise language and/or practices which are culturally biased, insensitive, or restrict the participation of constituents, volunteers, and staff based on cultural bias.
4. Establish measureable ally-building goals (i.e. outcomes) for managers, supervisors, directors and officers in organizational strategic and annual work plans.
5. Work with governmental and private foundations to include language in funding solicitations that encourages meaningful WOC participation in management and programmatic positions among grant applicants.
6. Work with governmental and private foundations to adopt ways to incentivize meaningful WOC participation in management and programmatic positions among grant applicants.
7. Build goals intended to increase participation and visibility of WOC into programmatic goals and objectives.
8. Create Community Accountability Boards and encourage their participation in the development of program development as a way of ensuring culturally appropriate strategies.
9. Integrate measures for increasing WOC leadership development into performance reviews of managers, supervisors, directors and officers.

Training/Research

WOCN can look toward creating and informing the field of organizational models and structures that are successful at reducing or minimizing institutional barriers to WOC advancement. Training on these models could focus on attitudinal, structural, and ideological change. Further, additional research is desperately needed in this field as it relates to the demographics of the field and what positions they hold.

Recommendations for effecting attitudinal, structural and ideological changes in training/research include:

1. Conduct research to establish a demographic picture of sexual assault and domestic violence agencies and coalitions staffing, volunteer, BoD, and community compositions.

2. Conduct annual assessment of organization's demographic similarity to communities served for constant evaluation of agency's attempt to reflect the community.

3. Implement client satisfaction surveys and evaluate for culturally competent service.

4. Conduct research to identify trends and evaluate practices for regional commonalities and differences, particularly as it relates to areas of the U.S. demographic concentrations of large (im)migrant populations and common socio-economic variables, and correlate with organizational compositions.

5. Identify/Develop and implement best practice-based training models which increase knowledge and skills in pro-active ally-building.

6. Mandate staff development and allocate monies in annual budgets for training in areas of leadership, cultural competency and ally-building (which must include an analysis of 'whiteness').

7. Require mainstream/white leadership to receive training on institutional forms of oppression and how they continue to manifest today including within the anti-violence against women's movement.

8. Establish anti-racism & ally-building summits and institutes for mainstream/white leadership to be facilitated conjointly by WOCN and white allies. Encourage funding sources to incentivize mainstream/white leadership participation in said convenings.

9. Develop skills of mainstream/white leadership to confront and challenge inappropriate and/or discriminatory language, schools of thought, and practices particularly as it relates to WOC leadership and development.

10. Research the number of tenured years (longevity) in leadership positions and compare those of WOC and white women, as well as the conditions under which they leave their positions.

11. Evaluate the track-record of WOC leadership development provided by tenured mainstream white leadership.

12. Conduct research of white allies to document their experiences as compared to those of WOC.
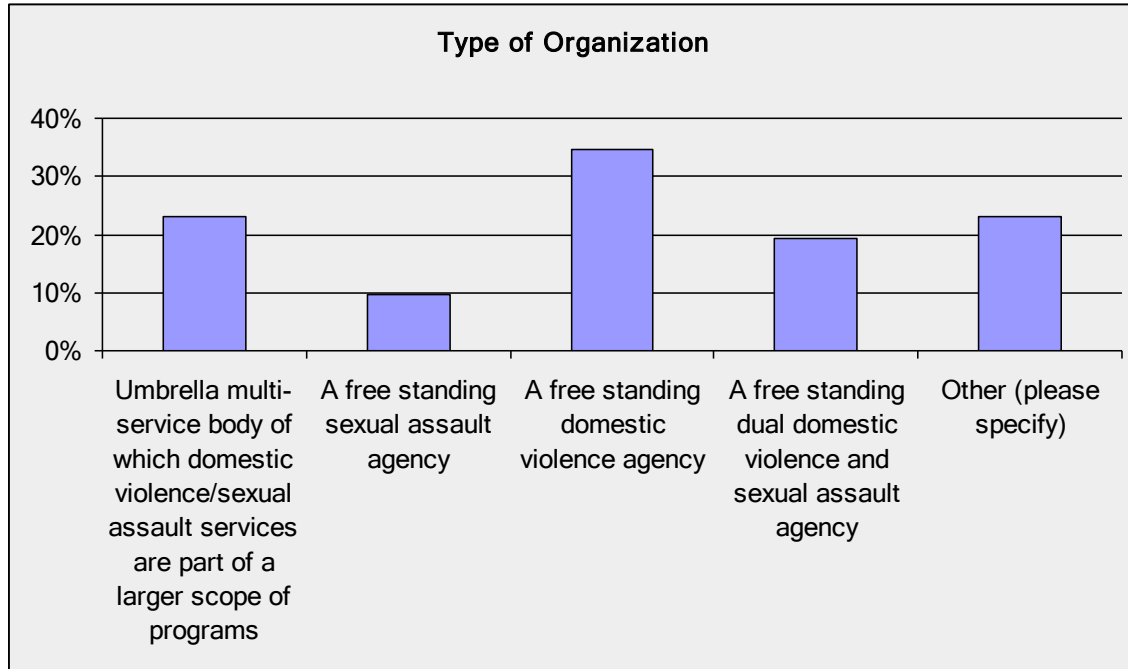
Leadership

WOCN can look toward developing the collective capacity of white allies across the country to advance this work. Leadership should be skilled in working with mainstream/other white leadership in revolutionizing how anti-violence against women's work can be more rooted in a larger social justice framework. Leadership development should look to impact attitudes, structures, and ideology.

Recommendations for effecting attitudinal, structural and ideological changes in <u>leadership</u> include:

1. Establish and maintain formal and informal mentoring strategies for WOC who may be mentored by both other professional WOC and white women. Formal strategies should include both qualitative as well as quantitative outcomes. Mentoring strategies should include at a minimum, professional skills development, coaching, and counseling; both group mentoring (i.e. caucuses, convenings, etc.) as well as individual opportunities (i.e. peer-to-peer, coaching).
2. Develop best practices for performance measures related to increasing WOC leadership within the organization, larger field and communities.
3. Review job descriptions for greater correlations between 'qualifications/ requirements' and actual duties to be performed. Modify academic requirements, which may serve as impediments for hiring or advancement where appropriate.
4. Value not only the traditional education or academic background of WOC candidates for hire or promotion, but consider the vast experiences and education possessed.
5. Encourage WOC staff (line to management) to represent organization at local, county, and statewide coalitions/collaborations.

6. Require mainstream/white leadership as well as WOC to establish anti-oppression/anti-racism and ally-building goals for individuals (staff, volunteers, board members, etc.) to be expressly stated and reported in organization collateral (i.e. brochures, annual reports, fundraising events, etc.).
7. Require social justice subject matter explicitly as it pertains to WOC, racism, and other attendant issues to be part of BoD's interviews. Require mainstream/white board members to network and engage with allied organizations, which address aforementioned social justice issues as a mechanism for increasing their cultural competencies.
8. Examine BoD by-laws for language that is exclusionary. Integrate pro-social justice and anti-racism goals and language into governance materials. Move BoD toward a demographic reflection of service communities and populations.
9. Require staff and volunteers (including BoD) to participate in WOC and other social justice related conferences where appropriate (i.e. WOC at WOC institutes; mainstream/white staff and volunteers at institutional racism conferences, etc).
10. Consider term-specific or time-limited positions for upper management positions with built in succession planning to avoid entrenched leadership.

Appendix A
Charts

Type of Organization

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Umbrella multi-service body of which domestic violence/sexual assault services are part of a larger scope of programs	23.1%	12
A free standing sexual assault agency	9.6%	5
A free standing domestic violence agency	34.6%	18
A free standing dual domestic violence and sexual assault agency	19.2%	10
Other (please specify)	23.1%	12
	answered question	52
	skipped question	1

Charts

Number of Years with Current Organization

Legend: High School, Bachelor, Masters, Technical or Vocational, Juris Doctorate

Chi Squared: p-value: 0.48
Insufficient evidence to reject the independence of education and number of years in organization.

Number of Years with Current Organization

Legend: African American/Black, Latina/Latin American, White/European-American, Other

Chi Squared: p-value: 0.90
There is insufficient evidence to reject the independence of race and number of years in organization.

Charts

Type of Organization

40%	
30%	
20%	
10%	
0%	

Umbrella multi-service body of which domestic violence/sexual assault services are part of a larger scope of programs | A free standing sexual assault agency | A free standing domestic violence agency | A free standing dual domestic violence and sexual assault agency | Other (please specify)

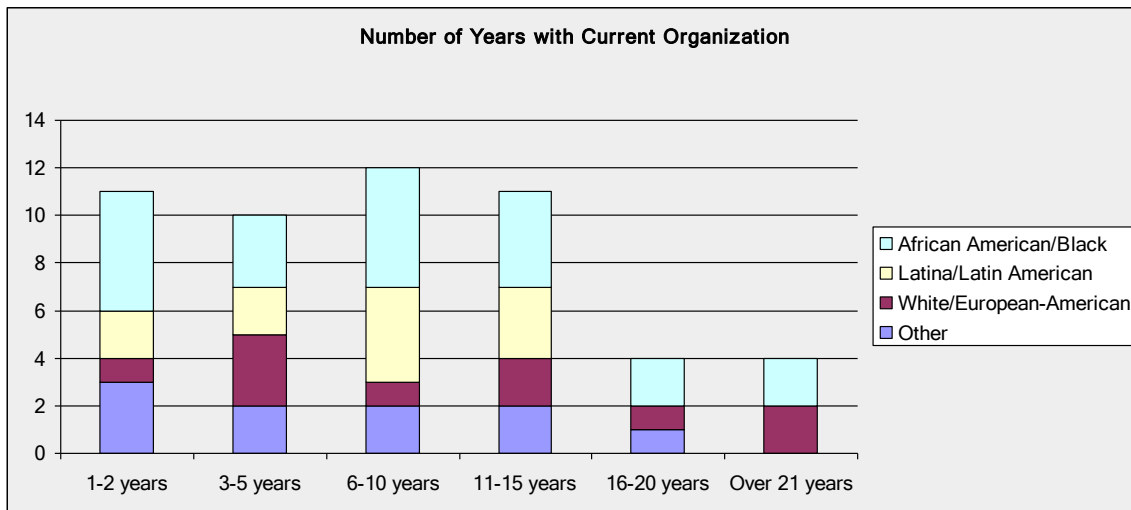| Type of Organization		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Umbrella multi-service body of which domestic violence/sexual assault services are part of a larger scope of programs	23.1%	12
A free standing sexual assault agency	9.6%	5
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A free standing dual domestic violence and sexual assault agency	19.2%	10
Other (please specify)	23.1%	12
	answered question	**52**
	skipped question	**1**

Charts

Number of Years with Current Organization

Chi Square: p-value: 0.48
There is insufficient evidence to reject the independence of education and number of years in organization.
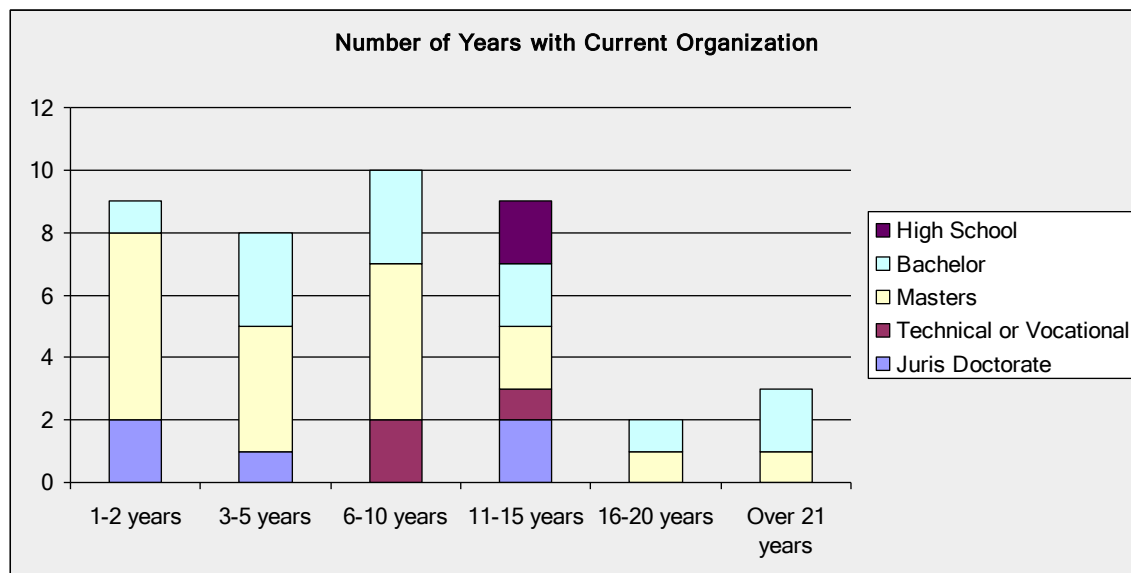
Support for Women of Color

Have you been in a position to support other WOC who have directly experienced or witnessed ethnic or race-related bias in your DV/SA workplace?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
No	13.2%	5
Yes	86.8%	33
	answered question	**38**
	skipped question	**15**

Based upon your observations, White women are generally treated ____ with regards to opportunities, expectations, or other experiences than their WOC counterparts?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
More favorably	72.7%	8
Less favorably	0.0%	0
No differently	27.3%	3
Please explain:		8
	answered question	**11**
	skipped question	**42**

Appendix B
Survey Questionnaire

Survey on the Experiences of Women of Color in Executive/Management Positions

Please take a moment to complete this survey on your professional experiences in an executive or management position within domestic violence and/or sexual assault programs in the United States. It is the intention of this survey to capture women's experiences related to race/ethnic related bias or discrimination, which may trigger strong emotions in some. Therefore, we ask that you take care of yourself, step away if necessary and allow yourself time to process as you complete this survey. Your answers will be kept confidential. Thank you for your participation.

1. Personal Information

The following information is for data purposes only. All identifying information will be coded for confidentiality. **Section 1 to be completed by both Women of Color and Women identifying as European American/White/Non-Hispanic.**

First Name: _____   Last Name: _____

Date of Birth [mm/dd/yyyy]: _____

Best Telephone: _____   Best Email: _____

Mailing Address [optional]: _____

City: _____   State: _____   ZIP Code: _____

a. How do you identify ethnically/racially? Check all that apply.

☐ African American/Black
☐ European American/White/Non-Hispanic
☐ Latina/Latin American
☐ Asian America/Asian Pacific Islander
☐ Middle Eastern/Arab American
☐ South East Asian/Indian
☐ Native American/Indigenous

Other:
_____

b. What is your highest level of formal education?

☐ High School
☐ Some College
☐ Bachelor
☐ Masters
☐ PhD
☐ Technical or Vocational

Other: _____

c. Tell us about any formal training in domestic violence/sexual assault services (DV/SA)? "Formal training" refers to organized, structured, standardized education that may be required for certification by an authorizing body (i.e. state/local government, licensing board, etc).

_____

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2. Involvement in Anti-Domestic Violence/Sexual Violence Work in the U.S.

Section 2 to be completed by both Women of Color and Women identifying as European American/White/Non-Hispanic.

a. When did you join your current organization?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1-2 years	3-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	Over 21 years

b. What was your title/position at the time of your original hire?

c. How long have you been in your current position?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1-2 years	3-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	Over 21 years

d. What is your <u>current</u> job title/position?
Briefly describe your job duties:

3. Scope or Type of Anti-Domestic Violence/Sexual Violence Organization

Section 3 to be completed by both Women of Color and Women identifying as European American/White/Non-Hispanic.

a. Is your organization a:

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Umbrella multi-service body of which domestic violence/ sexual assault services are part of a larger scope of programs?	A free standing sexual assault agency?	A free standing domestic violence agency?	A free standing dual domestic violence and sexual assault agency?	Other

Other, please describe:

b. What are your current organization's recruitment, hiring and promotion practices? (check all that apply).

☐	☐	☐	☐
Traditional skill set solicited	Non-traditional skill set solicited	Promoted from within	Other

Other, please describe:

c. Who is involved in the interviewing and hiring process?

☐ Human Resources ☐ Managers ☐ Peers ☐ Panel ☐ Department head ☐ Other

Other, please describe:

d. What opportunities exist for mentoring?

☐ Pairing of new staff with old ☐ Accessibility/Exposure to outside mentoring assistance ☐ Opportunity to connect with peers, colleagues outside of current organization ☐ Other ☐ None

Other, please describe:

e. Fiscal: Finance and fundraising - In your leadership capacity you: (check all that apply).

☐ Have access to budgets or funders, ☐ Participate in budget meetings ☐ Are expected to make donations to the organization ☐ Are expected to attend or participate in events/fundraisers

f. Community Relations, outreach: Do you? (check all that apply).

☐ Interface regularly with the grassroots community ☐ Interface regularly with professional community ☐ Interface regularly with partnerships or collaborative relationships ☐ Interface regularly with the media

g. What is the community's level of involvement at your organization: (check all that apply).

☐ Service population ☐ Volunteers ☐ Advisory council ☐ Board Members ☐ None ☐ Other

Other, please describe:

h. Client-agency relationship: Which best describes your organization? (check all that apply).

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Board reflects service population	Executive Staff reflects service population	Line Staff reflects service population	Volunteers reflect service population	Organization is not reflective of service population

i. Relationship to social change movement: Which best describes your organization?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Feminist Roots/ community-based	Social Service/ Social Work	Public Health	Medical/Hospital - based	Criminal justice based	Other

Other, please describe:

j. Overall how would you best characterize your organization's "persona" (based on staff, board, volunteers, clients and community reputation?

☐	☐	☐	☐
Mainstream	Multicultural	Ethnic Specific	Circumstance Specific (i.e. immigrant, monolingual, child services, trafficking etc.,)

k. What is your organizational mission or statement of purpose?

l. If not included in the organization's mission/statement of purpose, are there "value statements" or organizational principles" that contain language that demonstrates a commitment to diversity? If yes, please include below:

m. If your program/work experiences have included race/ethnic-specific programs describe:

n. What has been your most rewarding experience in DV/SA work? Describe.

o. What has been your least rewarding experience in DV/SA work? Describe.

4. Racism in the workplace

Section 4 to be completed by Women of Color only. Women identifying as European American/White/Non-Hispanic, please skip to section 5.

Ethnic or race-related bias to varying degrees can look and feel differently for different people where for some it is obvious and blatant and to others, it may be practiced and experienced more subtly. At this point, we would like to capture your observations and/or experience with workplace ethnic or race-related bias in an effort to better support women of color working within the anti-domestic and sexual violence professions. Again, all survey responses are confidential.

Ethnic or race-related bias is defined herein as "a system in which one group of people exercises abusive power over others on the basis of skin color and racial heritage; a set of implicit or explicit beliefs, false assumptions and actions based upon an ideology of inherent superiority of one racial or ethnic group over another. Systemic ethnic or race-related bias occurs when these practices are embedded within organizational and institutional structures and programs as well as within individual thought or behavior pattern."

Based on this definition, please respond to the following:

a. Have you experienced any of the following in your DV/SA workplace which you perceive to be ethnic/race-related? (check all that apply).

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cultural Ignorance	Stereo-typing	Cooptation	Glass Ceiling	Marginalization	Isolation	Surveillance	Silencing Or exclusion

If any boxes were checked, please describe:

b. Have you experienced any of the following workplace challenges as a result of your interest and/or advocacy of WOC issues?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cultural Ignorance	Isolation	Surveillance	Silencing Or Exclusion	Marginalization	Resistance	Retaliation	Other

If any boxes were checked , please describe:

c. Have you been in a position to support other WOC who have directly experienced or witnessed ethnic or race-related bias in your DV/SA workplace?

☐	☐
No	Yes

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If yes, please describe:

5. Perceptions of Workplace Challenges for WOC in DV/SA Programs

Section 5 to be completed by women who identify as European American/White/Non-Hispanic. Women of Color, please skip to section 6.

a. Have you identified situations which you perceive to be ethnic or race-related bias against WOC in the DV/SA workplace?

☐ ☐
No   Yes

If yes, please describe:

b. Are you aware of instances of White women advocating on behalf of WOC in those situations?

☐ ☐
No   Yes

If yes, please describe:

c. Based upon your observations, White women are generally treated _____ with regards to opportunities, expectations, or other experiences than their WOC counterparts?

☐ ☐ ☐
More Favorably   Less favorably   No differently

Please explain:

6. Outcomes of experiences with racism in DV/SA programs

Section 6 to be completed by both Women of Color and Women identifying as European American/White/Non-Hispanic.

a. In general, have you observed any of the following consequences or outcomes as a result of ethnic or race-related bias in the workplace? (check all that apply).

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Material   Cultural   Physical   Social   Emotional/psychological   other   None

(i.e. financial, loss of employment)

Other, please describe:

b. Based upon the above-mentioned consequences or outcomes, have there been any changes within your organization regarding workplace policy, practice, training, culture or environment?

☐   ☐
No   Yes

If yes, please describe:

7. Recommendations for addressing ethnic or race related bias in DV/SA programs

Section 7 to be completed by both Women of Color and Women identifying as European American/White/Non-Hispanic.

a. Based on your experiences, what are 2-3 strategies that you think would address the problem of ethnic or race-related bias in DV/SA programs?

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐
Training   Commitment   More diversified staff   Ethnic-specific   Other
       to diversity   & volunteers   services

Other, please describe:

b. Do you know of any existing or formerly existing organizations or programs that have addressed (or attempted to address) ethnic or race-related bias successfully? If so, please indicate: 1. What key variables contributed to their initiation or successful implementation of these strategies? 2. Please provide name and description of organization.

8. Additional Feedback

Please list any other information which you feel would be helpful to this study.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Sandra Henriquez
Leah Aldridge
Henriquez/Aldridge & Associates

Please submit survey by completing the following steps:
1. Download and save survey form to your computer
2. Complete and save survey form
3. E-mail completed survey form as an attachment to:
leahandsandra@gmail.com
or print and fax to 888 317 7713

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Appendix C
Follow-up Interview Questionnaire

1. Type of organization

SA Agency   DV Agency   Dual Agency   DV Coalition   SA Coalition   Dual Coalition

2. Length of time at :   agency   coalition   in movement

3. Were you in an executive or leadership role? What was your position?

4. Was your overall experience positive or negative? Please describe.

5. Are there support services/healing that you feel WOC need to be able to do this work? Please describe.

6. Do you see any correlation between women of color who have positive leadership experiences in the movement and their access to mentoring? If yes, what can this be attributed to?

7. Do you see any correlation between formal/traditional education and the ability of women of color to be promoted or hired into leadership positions? Please describe.

8. Do you see any correlation between organizational mission, value or purpose statements; which state a commitment to oppression, diversity etc., and their commitment to creating opportunities for women of color leadership? If yes, please describe?

9. Do you see any correlation between the representation/composition of an organization's Board of Directors and their commitment to WOC leadership? If yes, please describe?

10. Can you describe an instance in which an ideal situation would exist? If so, what kinds of practices or policies need to be in place to create this situation at other agencies/coalitions?

11. In your external relationships with peers or colleagues, do you experience racism?

12. Do you have any thoughts on the effectiveness of anti-racism training and its correlation to WOC leadership development?

13. Are you aware of any mechanisms for accountability within our movement which would create a reality that "women can go anywhere and be served or work, free from bias or…"? If not, do you have any suggestions on how we can measure accountability?

14. Is there any other information that you would you like to share with us?

Bibliography & End Notes

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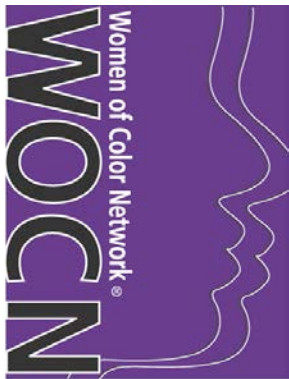
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The Women of Color Network (WOCN), a project of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRCDV) is a national grassroots initiative dedicated to building the capacity of women of color advocates and activists responding to violence against women in communities of color. Through trainings, technical assistance, and advocacy, WOCN helps foster Women of Color in the advancement of their anti-violence work and leadership. WOCN would like to thank the support of and the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV).

Women of Color Network | 3605 Vartan Way, Suite 101 | Harrisburg, PA 17111
800-537-2238
www.womenofcolornetwork.org