

Lights, Camera, Community Action Episode 3

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 00:15

Hello and welcome to Lights Camera Community Action, a podcast brought to you by The New York State Community Action Association or NYSCAA. For short. My name is Heidi Barcomb, Program and Communications director for NYSCAA is the state association for New York's community action agencies, commonly known as CAAs. This mission is to strengthen the capacity of the Community Action Network to address the causes and conditions of poverty. This code was created in 1987 to provide CAS in New York with professional development opportunities, training and technical assistance. NYSCAA is the hub that brings together community action agencies in New York to network share successes and challenges and strategize to meet the needs of vulnerable New Yorkers. A community action agency or CA is a local organization with the mission of reducing poverty through locally designed and delivered programs and services targeted to the specific needs of their community. The 47 CA's in New York form a statewide service delivery system that connects individuals and families to the services they need to achieve economic status. When it comes to moving folks from poverty to self sufficiency, community action agencies know what works. Today we'll be talking with three community action agency staff members who have all participated in discuss Emerging Leaders Institute, you might hear us refer to the Emerging Leaders Institute as ELI 1.0, and 2.0. ELI 1.0, began in 2010 to provide high quality leadership training to build and enhance the capacity of future leaders and community action agencies. In 2011, Eli 2.0 was established to support those 1.0 graduates in taking their skill set higher. The ELI model involves three sessions throughout the year, each being a two day seminar, which incorporates formal training, mentoring and peer network opportunities. ELI 2.0. participants develop leadership skills by identifying a community need and creating a project to address the need. Projects follow the ROMA cycle, a model used by community action agencies to develop and assess programs in goals. Roma stands for results oriented management and accountability. Today we are speaking with three recent ELI 2.0 graduates who will share their story with you and talk about their ELI 2.0 projects. First, let's welcome Melinda.

Melinda Daniels, CAOG 02:44

Hi, everyone. My name is Melinda Daniels. I am the Executive Assistant and Compliance Officer of Community Action of Orleans in Genesee, we service over two counties. I've been with my agency for six years now.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 03:01

Thank you so much for being here with us. Melinda. Andrea, will you jump in next?

Andrea Bernard 03:06

Yes. Hi. My name is Andrea Barnard. I and I am the Family and Youth Service Manager at PEACE, Incorporated Family Resource Center. And we I've been with peace incorporated for over 13 years combined. But in my current role for two and a half years.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 03:27

Thank you so much and piece is it serves the Syracuse community primarily, correct?

Andrea Bernard 03:32

That's correct. We serve Onondaga County.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 03:35

Thank you for being here. Will you introduce yourself?

Janelle Hartwell, Delaware Opportunities 03:40

Hi, everyone. My name is Janelle Hartwell. I am the Community Services Director at Delaware Opportunities. I have been with Delaware opportunities for going on 16 years. My first 14 years were working in direct service. In the last two years, I've been working as a department director, and Delaware opportunities. We are a community action agency that serves Delaware County.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 04:05

Thank you so much for being here with us today. I really appreciate that. I want to jump right in and ask each of you to talk a little bit about what prompted you to join ELI 1.0.

Melinda Daniels, CAOG 04:18

This is Melinda Daniels, and I was prompted I received an email from NYSCAA. And I read the email and looked into the information. I was very intrigued when I read about ELI and my goal is to be the best employee that I can be for my agency. So, this was going to be a learning opportunity and it was going this this opportunity was really going to help me move forward and advance and my knowledge of my agency NYSCAA as a whole and just learn more and How I can be better and do better.

Andrea Bernard 05:03

And this is Andrea Barnard, I could jump in. For me, I had just started back in at the agency, and I was in this new role, and I was voluntold. About this program, and that I needed to sign up for it. And, and I could say that I'm happy that I was voluntold about this opportunity. I've definitely learned and grown from the experience with ELI 1.0. And this is.

Janelle Hartwell, Delaware Opportunities 05:39

Janelle Hartwell. Um, for me, it was it was a combination of a lot of different things. So, as I said, in the introduction, I worked for quite a few years here at Delaware opportunities, indirect service. And through that I had grown into an upper management position. But in doing that, I felt that there was really a need for me to get some in depth leadership skills, I had done a leadership cohort here that was offered by executive, our Executive Director here at the agency. And when I had seen this come from Niska, I was like, this is an amazing opportunity continue to continue my leadership growth and my professional development, I did really well with the the client side of things, but I really thought I could, you know, enhance my skills on the programmatic and the side of thing that could help me be a better leader in my position now being in a management position and a supervisory position. And one of the things coming into my position is I don't have any formal education; I have zero college education. So, one of the things I have worked extremely hard in my whole professional life is taking on opportunities

that I can to enhance myself and to ensure that I am doing the best that I can for myself, my family, my profession. And in doing that, you know, this was an amazing opportunity and a challenge for me to take on to be able to do that and continue to enhance that. And I think it's in community action. That's what we stand for, you know, we are helping people become better people. And for me, I feel that I am a success of that myself. And this was just an opportunity that Eli brought to me to continue that professional development.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 07:18

And so, ELI 1.0, and you've learned a lot through that session. And, you know, you had the opportunity to move forward into 2.0, knowing that you would extend those learning opportunities and have the opportunity to create a project for your community. So, I'm curious, because not everybody chooses to go to 2.0. So, I'm curious, what prompted each of you to join CLI two point out,

Janelle Hartwell, Delaware Opportunities 07:51

I think I'll jump in. For me, it was the continued opportunities, the continued leadership opportunities, and having the opportunity as a challenge, I saw it for myself to take those learning experiences and make it into a project, a nerve-racking opportunity, because then you have to present that project to your peers in the group and you have to work through the ROMA cycle. At the same time, I was working to become a Roma implementer. So, I was doing both at the same time and being able to see how they coincide together I felt was very challenging. And given that opportunity to enhance your leadership skills and a higher level in 2.0 was really amazing for me.

Andrea Bernard 08:29

And for me, I did not want 1.0 To end the relationships, the information to the support, that I felt, attended the meetings, I wanted that to continue to network in. And so when I saw a 2.0 was an option, I jumped right on it. I didn't didn't was not voluntold I was like yes. Not the project. I did not know at that time, but it it pushed me to grow a little bit more in what I'm doing. So, two point I'm ready for 3.0

Melinda Daniels, CAOG 09:11

This is Melinda Daniels. I agree with Andrew, Andrea and Janelle. My expectation through 1.0 you know was to was to learn and get as much knowledge as possible to make me a better employee make me have me be a better person to represent our agency or community. Once we were into that. It was a no brainer. ELI 2.0 That was a deeper dive and we were going to take this the next step forward. I was very excited and I agree with Andrea. I would love ELI 3.0 or an alumni group, the connections, the networks. And then the more we dealt with into that, that also brought to light, the NYSCAA affinity groups and I belong to some of those. And I am so lucky and so appreciative to have these groups of people that do similar roles to me, and I'm not constantly reinventing the wheel. If I need something, I reach out to my connections or my group, and nine times out of 10, one of them has a template or we brainstorm, it's actually, I guess the best way I can describe it is, I finally feel like I'm working smarter and not harder.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 10:36

That's a great point. So I want to talk a little bit about the 2.0 projects. And I just want to kind of talk about that these are projects that anybody entering 2.0 knows they're going to participate in, but it is

sort of a blank slate, you are choosing your project based on what your community needs. And in doing so you are following the ROMA cycle, that results oriented management and accountability cycle that community action agencies base their work on. So Melinda, Can you fill us in a little bit about that ROMA cycle and what that that that process is.

Melinda Daniels, CAOG 11:22

So the Roma's cycle is very helpful within our agencies. But it's also very helpful in these are things that we're doing in our everyday lives, we just don't stop to take a step back and analyze things. We're doing it we're analyzing, we don't look at it that way. So these projects, we needed to use the wrong recycle. So we needed to assess the community need, we needed to plan for that need, come up with strategies and implement what we were going to do, then review the results to see if we were successful or not regroup if we needed to, if by evaluating the process. It's a really good tool. And when you think about the assessing the planning the implementing the results, and then you reevaluate. It is what we do every day, every day, we go to work, this isn't working, I need to reassess, I need to replan, I need to re implement, I need the results. And if this is working, that's my evaluation. So the ROMA cycle was a very, it's very good tool. And it was very helpful with our projects.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 12:38

Thank you so much. So you each had your own project that you created to improve your community and address a specific community need, and they were all quite different, and really great programs or projects. So I'm going to ask you if you can share what your project was and what your specific need in your community was that you wanted to address. Andrea, you had a really great one. And I know that you really had to use the ROMA cycle, because you ran into some roadblocks as you went along. Correct?

Andrea Bernard 13:13

That is correct. You use that over and over.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 13:17

Yeah, will you? Will you share your project with us?

Andrea Bernard 13:21

Yes, yes, Heidi, my project is called wash out absent. And what prompted me to put this project together was one of my students. So my site has a program that is a partnership with the school district. And the kids who are suspended come to my building, and they get there is like a home based program. And a young man was absent very often. And part of my job is to call and follow up with why what's going on. And the reason the young man was not coming to school is because he did not have clean clothing. And immediately went to Walmart purchase something for him to come to school the next day. But knowing this is not something that could be done, continually done. And so came up with the idea of washing how we could support the families by getting their clothes washed. And so that was how I assessed it that he could not be the only student that is going through this. And then I started the planning phase. And I had recently left the district, the school district and I had a co worker who I contacted and said, How could you help me support this initiative that I would like to put together knowing that my agency would not have funding to provide washing the wash Love the clothes for the

families. And so we came up, came up with five different schools. So she helped me reached out to the five schools that had that as at high risk for attendance issues. And the goal was to work with 10 families from each one of those schools plus the kids that are at Eastside Family Resource Center, to get them to a laundry mat weekly, to get their clothes washed with the intention that they will attend school. And once we tried to implement that, connected with Kalami laundry mat, which is a local laundromat here in Syracuse, and Onondaga County, they, their prices could not work with what we could offer. And this is how stuff is so mysterious that the district had funding, extra funding that they needed to spend so they would be able to support this project. So we decided, we reached out to classic city. And they had agreed to help us to work with us to partner with us to help these families. We Our goal was 50 families we had reached out to 100 families at this point. just word of mouth talking about it's sitting at tables, talking about what we wanted to do. And also the district has staff that helped contacted those families that were missing school. We were all gung ho ready to go have contracts setup where the family sign, yes, my kid is going to come to school. Yes, they're going to we provided that the classic city will go to their house, we gave them bags to put their dirty clothes and we will they will wash it folded and return it to them. And then it did not work. Back, reassess, reassess, yes, it did not work. Families. 18 of those families had agreed and signed a contract. And then classic city will arrive at their door, and the clothing is not outside. And so we have to, once again going back to the drawing board, what could we do differently. And after that reassessment, we reached out to high schoolers. So high school was done. And now out of the five school, high school is a more tend to wash their own clothes, right, their parents are not usually doing it for them. And once again, we got a few. We got a handful that agreed. They had their parents support, and they got it done. But it has not come to the full what our vision. When this was put together. I thought it was such an awesome idea how many families we get help helping them have clean clothes, helping them to get to school. And after it was April, me, we decided that we're going to have to figure out what we could do. We'll have to assess again in the fall and starting planning again, and what could we do differently.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 18:38

And I think that that assessment piece that you're talking about is so important that reevaluating, and I'm going to jump to Melinda for a minute, because I think that you had a situation with an existing program that you had to start with that assessment and evaluation of correct. Absolutely.

Melinda Daniels, CAOG 19:00

So my project was called Angels in action, the guiding light project, angels and action was a committee that was formed, fizzled out and reinvented due to this project. The Guiding Light actually was the name of the project. And that was an idea that I had, because my agency and my community needs assessment was showing that the highest need was domestic violence. So I chose domestic violence shelters to support the ultimate goal was for us to put together backpacks for all ages. And all genders, men, women, whatever the case was, and we wanted to have items readily available change clothes, personal care items, emergency items. If you had to leave your home and be relocated, and you made it to that destination spot. You would have a backpack with the basic needs at least to get you through the next one. me for hours. So I just put some feelers out there. And ultimately, we ended up with 16 individuals that wanted to be a part of this committee. And myself, so 15 Plus myself, and everybody was on board with supporting domestic violence. The stats in the community in the end, my agencies community needs assessment. In Orleans County, there's a total of 180, domestic violence victim

victims, and then Genesee County, there was a total of 405 domestic violence victims. And we service both counties. Not every single one of the domestic violence victims goes through the domestic violence, shelter. But the shelter is something I don't want to say that it's overlooked because it isn't, but because it's quiet, and you can't know the location. I sometimes it's difficult for community members and in organizations to make contact to donate basic needs. So we assess the situation, we formed the committee, we went right into planning, what are we going to get? How are we going to support them? I reached out to both managers between the two counties and ask them, what is it that you need because both counties are very different? The needs in Orleans County are very different than the needs in Genesee County. So now I'm trying to make both counties How can I? How can we provide what they need when they're very different? So we went into the planning phase, we came up with a good plan. We knew there needs between both counties. So then we decided, Okay, now we're going to implement so we started, we started meetings, we came up with a logo. Everybody was doing their part, and everybody was doing something. And we ended up providing 40 families between two counties that actually went into the domestic violence shelters with the supplies that they needed. We received a donation of 200 backpacks. So we needed multiple items for various ages. So obviously, toothbrush, toothpaste, a change of clothes and clean underwear, basic needs. And then you think, then we got into thinking about the age groups, okay, babies need formula, babies need diapers, these homes, these domestic violence shelters, they need items, too. It could be a coffee pot, it could be clean sheets for the beds, it could be towels shampoo. So we just gathered items. And at the end of the project, we reassessed and we reevaluated and ultimately, none of us wanted this to end it was very, very positive. We were very appreciated for doing what we were doing. And just because it was a project, it couldn't end just because I met the goal of elf. We wanted to continue with this. So to this day, we I call monthly to the DV managers, and every month they come to my site, and they pick up a vanload of items. There's more and more community members involved in this word spread like wildfire. And the needs had changed. That the basic things that we were sending, were plentiful. But then it was brought to my attention. When you have to leave your home, no matter what hour no matter what day, if you're being abused, typically you're going to try to call 911 You're going to try to call a family member, you're going to try to call somebody for help. So then it was brought to my attention when those things happen. The abuser goes right for that person's phone. And they want to break it. They want to throw it across the street, whatever the case may be, because they don't want you making that phone call.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 24:11

What a great project, what a great need that you identified not a great need, but a real serious need that you identified and then through Ely 2.0 project you were able to address that. And Janelle, I know that in your community, you had a very different approach and did different type of need. Can you talk to us a little bit about your project?

Janelle Hartwell, Delaware Opportunities 24:35

Yeah. Hi, thanks, Heidi. So for us, Delaware County, similar to some of our partner agencies that are very rural. We are very large county. So Delaware County is geographically the size of the state of Rhode Island, but we have no public transportation. So where our main office is located, makes it difficult for people get to get to us and we had found on coming out of the hill have COVID, we had found that one of the things COVID taught us is we could find other creative ways to reach out to

people and meet them where they're at and be able to meet their needs in a way, that doesn't mean that they have to come to us. So in doing that, I had the idea for our my project, which was developing a satellite office. So having Delaware opportunities go to one of our higher need communities that we were able to find through our community needs assessment and through our census, one of our higher need communities that we would be able to set up a satellite office, to have Delaware opportunities go there and bring us to them, which makes things a lot easier with the lack of public transportation. And some of it was the fear of people coming on the heels of COVID. Just being back out into the community is how we first started it. So in going through the ROMA cycle in doing this, I you know, the planning phase is we're in the you know, the assessing phase, I guess we'll start with the first thing was, we had noticed we had had less in person, people coming to our agency, Gone were the days that our lobby was full, and people were coming here. And we had to figure out why because we knew there was a need, right? We knew that there was still those same families still had a need, but they weren't coming to us. So and we saw that there was an increased need of low income people in the community, but we had to get creative of how we could still serve them. Because a lot of the funding that was available during COVID was no longer available. So through this, I was able to start somewhat of a plan for what this would look like. And you know, the first thing, of course, was just running it by our executive director of what do you think she was highly on board that, you know, it was a great idea. But the our next barrier we thought might be a barrier is where do we find a location to do something like that. And through the planning phases, we have a CTO workforce and work development center right in the village where we started this. So I just asked them, they had also noticed that they had low numbers since coming out of the heels or COVID. People weren't coming back in for job readiness. They weren't you know, they were just noticing. So it went much smoother than I had anticipated. They said, Sure. When do you want to start we have space available. We were able to get that started right away. And it worked as a great collaboration to allow not only our agency to get this to this area, but to partner with our program. And with the program that was there. How you know, we were able to work together and get that happening. And the biggest barrier, I will say that we ran into was just finding staffing. We the satellite office is open every Tuesday. So we are open every Tuesday from nine to three. And a lot of my staff and the community services department do go there. And they do work that and staffing it once a week. I think that was a little bit of a big idea that I had and it was a great idea. And at times it was a little bit difficult. But I have to say it's been amazing. We have gone through the process. Now I can say the first month that we were able to do that was August of 2022. So going into almost a year, we have served 166 Total families that have come in and our goal was 10 a month. Now that 166 families, some of those are repeat families. I'm not on duplicating them. But I think that's a good thing to leave them the way they are because it does show the success that people know that we're there. So they're coming back. So it's not just a one time out of curiosity, they're realizing that we are seeing, they know that we're here, they're seeing that it's been successful, and they're coming back. And it's providing them an opportunity to, you know, if a program goes there, and it may not be the program that they need, that program is able to help them make that connection and provide that warm handoff. If you come in specific for HeadStart, let's say but today housing is there, the housing staff can help you contact the HeadStart people directly while you're there and provide that information where you would otherwise have to travel upwards 45 minutes to an hour from where we are to our main office location. We are coming to them. It's been amazing as far as the opportunities we've been able to provide. But on the flip side Now going on to almost a year of this I'm seeing where it's at, it's definitely provided an opportunity for the clients that we serve. But it's also provided an opportunity for

our agency to have an increased collaboration with other community members and other opportunities in that community to make ourselves more aware because believe it or not, some people don't always know who we are, what services we offer. So it's given us an opportunity to promote our agency and our community action agency and all of the different programs within the community. So it's been a win win situation. We have been really fortunate. And you know, I look forward into this. Like I said, this will be our first it'll hit a year mark and August and we will continue so we're still continuing on.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 29:54

Thank you so much for sharing that. And I'm wondering, Andrea, if you can talk with us about Oh, I know that you mentioned how many families have signed up? Do you have any information? And you might not. But I'm wondering if you have any information about school days missed or if this project is affecting school attendance.

Andrea Bernard 30:17

The project is to help increase students to attend school because they're missing too many days of school.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 30:26

Right? And do you know, are you getting feedback? Have you done any informal,

Andrea Bernard 30:31

the feedback with the with the kids who have who did take part, their attendance is better, which helped with the classwork. So even at the end of the school year, their classwork was better. That just, it's just for them. And in school. That's a ripple effect. We're and I, I beat myself up a little because I wanted more, I wanted more. Because if they could just see that the little has changed with the few who has followed through that they too could be successful.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 31:09

Right. One of the things I liked about your project is that it was initially for the students, but you do include the laundry for all the family, correct. That is correct. So and Melinda, and I'm wondering if you can talk to us a little bit about the number of backpacks you've handed out if you've had any feedback.

Melinda Daniels, CAOG 31:30

We have we have received feedback, I believe, in roughly in total, I don't have the stats between both counties, one county versus another. There have been 40 families, whether it's a single adult, female or male, or a male and or female with children. There have been 40 adults served with our bet with the backpacks and the things that we have gathered and donated, and about 30 children. I have received feedback from some of the domestic violence shelter the people that had to stay there. And they loved the diapers. They said the diapers were a lifesaver. There was one family that said the timing could not couldn't have been any more perfect. So that family really appreciated everything that they needed was readily available. And then we were even able to offer. Once the family went and was able to safely leave the safe house and transition into an apartment, we were able to we were able to help this one individual with a vacuum cleaner, a coffee pot, some linens for the for the bedding and some towels

and washcloths for the bathroom. So so far, everybody is very appreciative that it looks like we're definitely meeting a need. And we're just going to continue to do so.

Janelle Hartwell, Delaware Opportunities 33:09

Yeah, and Heidi, this is Janelle, I wasn't sure. I did do some outreach, because one of the things I had not put into my, my plan was in getting those results and reassessing as we do programmatically each program that we do does a community, or I'm sorry, a customer satisfaction survey. So one of the things that I didn't think at the time not knowing this would be successful or not was coming up with a customer satisfaction survey survey to get some, you know, feedback of what they think works well, what doesn't. So, without having that, in hindsight, I will start doing that moving forward as we reach our one year mark, but I was able to do some outreach, and I was able to get some specific feedback. So if it's okay, I can just share a couple of exact things that people had given. Yeah, please do. Okay. So one of them said, the fact that you're coming here saves me a lot, I probably wouldn't see anyone if I had to go to Dollar higher Hamden. And if you weren't in the satellite office on Tuesday, I never would have gotten the help. It was definitely very beneficial to me. A staff person had told me that their feedback was we can reach out to many more people who were in need. This helps the client stress and a less scary situation than they may already be in. It lessens the stress on us for them to come out and help them get the services they may need. It helps them to understand the paperwork that they may not be able to do on their own and we can explain it and help them fill it out more one on one and then we got some very general having do people call Delaware opportunities do having do here regularly is amazing. We can't thank you enough for coming over and over again. I get thanked for being here. Clients who don't have transportation are thankful because they can walk here. They're so appreciative of not just me, but the program being here in general. So I think it's been successful and you know, meeting people when they're where they're at you And I do think in part of the whole ROMA cycle, like I said, I do in hindsight, I wish I had implemented that as part of that was in implementing people with giving us regular feedback. But so far we've had, it's been hugely successful.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 35:13

That's really great feedback. And I want to, I want to switch gears for a minute. Because you know, the projects are all successful, you're clearly having a positive impact on your communities. And, and that is, you know, in human services and social work, that is a definite goal. But one of the goals of Eli is to help you be emerging leaders and develop your leadership skills. So I'm wondering if you can talk about how participating in ELI 2.0, and creating these projects has helped you in your leadership development and in your career path.

Andrea Bernard 35:55

And I'll jump in and Tria. In my career path, I would say, I was put on under agency and peace strategic team, as one of the up and coming leaders in the agency to plan on what we're planning to do for the agency in the next five years. And to me, that is, I think it's amazing that they even see that within me to sign me to be part of the strategic team for the agency, that they see the potential that is coming out of me from attending these leadership classes. So yes, I, they see and not only not only the agency, but even I'm in a sorority, and so it's working workwise, and in me personally, seeing the growth that I have gained from being in part of this. So thank you,

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 36:56

always so nice when your supervisors and higher ups recognize your growth and and include you in projects. Right. Okay. And Melinda, you've talked with me in the past about the how you feel that participation in ELI has helped you grow? Can you share some of that?

Melinda Daniels, CAOG 37:18

Yes, absolutely. When I first started with my agency, I was an administrative assistant. And I did feel that it was a little being a little underutilized. However, that soon changed. And it was when I wouldn't when I approached my CEO, my CEO was telling me, Melinda, you, you have potential, you're already doing things that are beyond your title. She was in full agreement, I really feel that you, you're the perfect candidate for elf. So we, you know, I joined and I've gone from the administrative assistant to executive assistant to compliance officer. And I'm still, I'm still going up. We haven't quite figured out what that exactly. I'm not too worried about a title. I know the direction it's going. But I have learned so much. And every, every time even now, when I'm attending one of my affinity groups, I'm always bringing back what we've brainstormed what we've shared, what we what I've learned, and bringing that back to the whole directors team. I'm a part of the directors team and everything that they do. They appreciate what I'm bringing back to the table, and I have now been able to implement what I've learned, especially with trainings, and training other staff. Now I'm now I'm teaching in small groups, chunks of our staff, things that they need to know and they need to know how to do to better support our agency, especially with CSPG with Niska, the Department of State it's been nonstop and some days. It's a little hard for me to comprehend, but it's all good stuff. And we just keep thriving and making things better. And the more that I stick with the connections that I've made through with networking through ally, the better it gets. I'm very appreciative to have this opportunity. And I'm just so happy. I will stay in it to the bitter end.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 39:33

And to hell. Can you share with us a little bit about how participating in Eli 2.0 and creating this project has helped you to grow and develop your leadership skills?

Janelle Hartwell, Delaware Opportunities 39:45

Absolutely. Um, like I said in the beginning for me, I had done a leadership program here at our agency that was offered by our executive director and even for me to do that and growing into a department director where I am I'm I never saw within myself the opportunities similar to I think how Andrea said, I never saw the skill set within myself that other people saw within me, I'm having the opportunity to do these leadership programs has given me an opportunity to see my own professional abilities and has allowed me to continue to build on them. And it's extremely helpful when you have upper management looking at you and saying, I see something more in you, I want to push you harder, I see. And I was okay, being direct service, I loved what I did, I love serving the people that I did. But knowing that there was more opportunities for me and having the opportunities like this through Nesco, with Eli to continue to grow as a professional. And for me, I think what it's done and going through the ELA, you know, 2.0 from 1.0 is being able to see something and the start of it and see that that growth and see the trajectory and believe that it does provide you with the insight for yourself to want and continue to do more. And I think you said in the beginning, Heidi, some people don't go on to 2.0. And that's okay. You know, that's totally okay, what works for them. But for me, 2.0 was continued professional growth and

for me to continue to challenge myself. And I was able to see that there's a lot more that I'm capable of doing that maybe I was able to recognize without the skills that have now been instilled in me that I tried to pass down to my staff, and I encourage professional growth within them as well. So it's been an amazing process. And that ripple effect that Andrea had mentioned, you know, you are able to see the ripple effect of taking your leadership skills. And after we do these things, and sharing them with others, and just being able to continue that within yourself, because I think at no point do we ever stop learning? And do we ever stop growing. So having these type of opportunities allows us to stay abreast of things that are out there for us and continue to be as successful as we are within our positions.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 41:55

So we're gonna get ready to wrap up and I want to close with this one final question. And Janelle, I think that you really kind of led us to this question. What words? Would you now that you've finished, Eli 1.0? And 2.0? What would words of advice or what would you suggest to someone who is considering enrolling in the NYSCAA as emerging leader Institute?

Janelle Hartwell, Delaware Opportunities 42:24

This is Janelle. And for me, I would say absolutely take the opportunity. I would just you know, if anybody had come to me and said, if one of my staff were to come to me and said, I saw this, what do you think? Should I do it? I would say absolutely. This is an amazing opportunity and take it and run with it.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 42:44

And that's right, what would you say?

Andrea Bernard 42:46

Yes, this is Andrei, I was said jump in with two feet. Just jump in. It's an awesome experience, you will just grow and learn from it.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 42:59

Belinda, I know you have something to say to people who are considering it.

Melinda Daniels, CAOG 43:03

I encourage Eli every chance I get especially with our staff. It is one of the best things that I've ever participated in for my agency, where I've learned the most I've grown, you just embrace everything. And as long as you use what you're taught, you can only go up, I wouldn't strongly encourage, I don't want it to stop. I love the group. We just got to keep moving forward. But absolutely 100% As long as you your heart is in it for your agency, and you don't plan on leaving anytime soon. This is the best thing for you to do. Take this class.

Heidi Barcomb, NYSCAA 43:46

Thank you so much. So I think that that's a great way for us to end our session of Lights, Camera community action. And I want to once again, thanks, Janelle. And Draya and Melinda for joining us and sharing their experiences with Emerging Leaders Institute 1.0 and 2.0, and the ROMA cycle and how

they use that to put their projects together. So ladies, thank you so much for joining us today. We really appreciate your time and your knowledge. Thank you.

Andrea Bernard 44:17

Thank you. Thank you. Bye bye bye