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Healing Relationships: Emotion Work in Environmental Justice Community–University Partnerships

Mayra Sanchez Barba, Megan Taylor Williams, Ruth Rosas, Katia Pilar Carranza, Rio Oxas,
Patricia Arnal-Luna, Juan Carlos Garcia Sanchez, Selika Josiah Talbott,
and Sarah Reboloso McCullough

ABSTRACT

Problem Statement: Community–university partnerships are often regarded as promising strategies for addressing environmental injustices. Yet, community partners often bear substantial emotional labor as they confront bias and knowledge hierarchies, navigate unfamiliar academic norms, and manage administrative hurdles. As this labor can reproduce epistemic, social, and environmental inequities rather than transform them, attending to how these partnerships generate emotional work for community partners is essential to foster healing relationships.

Theoretical Framing: Drawing from feminist theories of knowledge production and procedural justice as a principle of environmental justice, we highlight the significance of emotions and marginalized standpoints that emerge from histories of abuse and discrimination. We use the concept of emotion work to illuminate this type of labor and analyze the complex asymmetrical power dynamics inherent in these types of partnerships.

Case Study Design: We focus on the Environmental Justice (EJ) Leaders Program, which has engaged 24 fellows from diverse organizations over 4 years in 9-month knowledge exchanges with the University of California, Davis researchers. The authors, who include program managers and one EJ Leader from each of the four cohorts, bring different positionalities that inform their analyses. They reflect on their respective experiences within the program and the emotion work each performed as the program evolved.

Case Study Results: Program managers and researchers can lessen the emotional labor of community partners by fostering their own emotional wisdom. By listening to community partners' concerns and moving through conflict with honesty and vulnerability, program managers and researchers can challenge knowledge hierarchies and foster greater inclusivity and respect for their community partners' experiences and contributions.

Conclusion: We advocate for university partners to develop a deeper appreciation of the unequal emotion work required to foster these relationships. We raise the importance of centering community partners' subjective experiences to create more equitable knowledge production practices capable of addressing environmental injustices.

Keywords: partnerships, emotion, knowledge, lived experience, science, community

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PROBLEM STATEMENT

Community–university partnerships are increasingly promoted in environmental justice for their capacity to address community concerns.¹ These partnerships are meant to foster long-term, trusting relationships between community and academic partners to coproduce knowledge toward a more socially and environmentally just society.² As Environmental Justice (EJ) Leader and coauthor Rio Oxas emphasizes, “Ideally, the intention of all parties is to authentically heal trauma and improve the conditions of disenfranchised communities.” They remind us that these partnerships are situated within long histories of discrimination, abuse, and exploitation that have excluded marginalized communities from decision making.³ Indeed, a key principle of EJ concerns not only the uneven distribution of environmental burden (outcome) but also the fairness of decision making (process).⁴ Participatory research methods are grounded in this principle of procedural justice, ensuring that impacted communities have a voice in shaping decisions.⁵ As epistemic hierarchies intersect with other

forms of systemic oppression, community partners often find that coproducing knowledge in these partnerships can be fraught. Although community–university partnerships are inherently interdependent, they are shaped by asymmetrical positionalities, complicating efforts to sustain them in equitable ways.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and national protests against anti-black police violence exposed deeply entrenched inequities in the United States, compelling many universities and research centers to reckon with their role in systemic oppression.⁶ In this context, the Environmental Justice Leaders Program (EJLP) at the University of California, Davis (UCD) emerged as an initiative to connect academic researchers and community members working with communities disproportionately burdened by environmental hazards. Across four cycles, EJLP has aimed to advance rigorous science through a more inclusive and equitable approach to environmental research and policymaking. Nevertheless, as extensive literature suggests, forging these partnerships can be challenging due to systemic power imbalances related to patriarchal, white supremacist, colonial, and capitalist hierarchies of labor and knowledge production within academia. EJ and diverse leaders have to continually try to convince academics to value not only their priorities but also their community well-being, approaches, and cultures.⁷ As our case study demonstrates, sustaining community–university partnerships demands substantial emotional work, particularly from community partners

¹Nicholas Freudenberg, Manuel Pastor, and Barbara Israel. “Strengthening community capacity to participate in making decisions to reduce disproportionate environmental exposures.” *American journal of public health* 101, no. S1 (2011): S123–S130. Alice K. Johnson Butterfield, and Tracy M. Soska. “University–community partnerships: An introduction.” *Journal of Community Practice* 12, nos 3–4 (2004): 1–11. Jonathan K. London, Kirsten Schwarz, Mary L. Cadenasso, Bethany B. Cutts, Charles Mason Jr, Jeanette Lim, Katie Valenzuela-Garcia, and Heather Smith. “Weaving community–university research and action partnerships for environmental justice.” *Action Research* 16, no. 2 (2018): 173–189. Sacoby Wilson, Dayna Campbell, Laura Dalemarré, Herb Fraser-Rahim, and Edith Williams. 2014. “A Critical Review of an Authentic and Transformative Environmental Justice and Health Community — University Partnership” *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 11, no. 12: 12817–12834. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph111212817>

²Carolina Balazs and Rachel Morello-Frosch. “The Three Rs: How Community-Based Participatory Research Strengthens the Rigor, Relevance, and Reach of Science.” *Environmental Justice* 6 (2013), 9–16. Penn, Loh. “Community–university collaborations for environmental justice: toward a transformative co-learning model.” *New Solutions: A Journal of Environmental and Occupational Health Policy* 26, no. 3 (2016): 412–428. Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar. “Meaningful engagement in research: Community residents as co-creators of knowledge.” *American journal of community psychology* 65, nos 3–4 (2020): 261–271.

³Luke W. Cole, and Sheila R. Foster. *From the ground up: Environmental racism and the rise of the environmental justice movement*. Vol. 34. NYU Press, 2001. Mascarenhas, M. (2020) *Lessons in Environmental Justice: From Civil Rights to Black Lives Matter and Idle No More*. SAGE Publications. Michael Méndez. *Climate change from the streets: How conflict and collaboration strengthen the environmental justice movement*. Yale University Press, 2020. Rachel Morello-Frosch, Manuel Pastor, and James Sadd. “Environmental justice and Southern California’s “risky” the distribution of air toxics exposures and health risks among diverse communities.” *Urban Affairs Review* 36, no. 4 (2001): 551–578. Rob Nixon. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Harvard University Press, 2011.

⁴First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit (1996) *Principles of Environmental Justice*. New York: United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice.

⁵Derek Bell, and Jayne Carrick. “Procedural environmental justice.” In *The Routledge handbook of environmental justice*, pp. 101–112. Routledge, 2017. Jonathan Skinner-Thompson. “Procedural environmental justice.” *Wash. L. Rev.* 97 (2022): 399.

⁶Marissa Bell, and Neil Lewis Jr. “Universities claim to value community-engaged scholarship: So why do they discourage it?” *Public Understanding of Science* 32, no. 3 (2023): 304–321. Devon C. Payne-Sturges, Gilbert C. Gee, and Deborah A. Cory-Slechta. “Confronting racism in environmental health sciences: moving the science forward for eliminating racial inequities.” *Environmental health perspectives* 129, no. 5 (2021): 055002. Jennifer D. Roberts, Katherine L. Dickinson, Marccus D. Hendricks, and Viniece Jennings. ““I can’t breathe”: examining the legacy of American racism on determinants of health and the ongoing pursuit of environmental justice.” *Current environmental health reports* 9, no. 2 (2022): 211–227. Nidhi Subbaraman. “How# BlackInTheVory put a spotlight on racism in academia.” *Nature* 582, no. 7812 (2020): 327–328.

⁷Marissa Bell, and Neil Lewis Jr. “Universities claim to value community-engaged scholarship: So why do they discourage it?” *Public Understanding of Science* 32, no. 3 (2023): 304–321. Charles R. Hale. *Engaging contradictions: Theory, politics, and methods of activist scholarship*. Univ of California Press, 2008. Budd Hall. “Beyond epistemicide: Knowledge democracy and higher education.” (2018). In M. Spooner & J. McNinch (Eds.), *Dissident knowledge in higher education* (pp. 84–101). University of Regina Press. Devon C. Payne-Sturges, Gilbert C. Gee, and Deborah A. Cory-Slechta. “Confronting racism in environmental health sciences: moving the science forward for eliminating racial inequities.” *Environmental health perspectives* 129, no. 5 (2021): 055002. Kalindi Vora, Sarah McCullough, and Sara Giordano. “Asking different questions in STEM research: feminist STS approaches to STEM pedagogy.” *ADVANCE Journal* 3, no. 1 (2022).

who are in more vulnerable positions. This labor is rarely supported systemically and usually remains invisible and undervalued. Given the histories of abuse and exploitation endured by disenfranchised communities, and the comparatively privileged positions of researchers—and to a lesser degree, program managers⁸—university partners have an ethical responsibility to alleviate the emotional burden their community partners face.

This emotional burden is akin to that borne by many doing equity work, an experience familiar to coauthor Oxas, an Indigenous (Mayan-Nawat) equity review consultant who frequently works with white academics. Oxas notices that an undervalued skill of any equity review consultant is to deliver critiques with full composure and professionalism. Although a statement by a client or partner may be outright racist—this is often due to their limited or partial understanding—Oxas recognizes that within academia, the feelings of both parties do not carry the same weight. Often, community partners fear that responding in the wrong way might compromise their relationship and therefore their ability to participate in decision-making spaces. Being in the most vulnerable or subordinate position, they often develop emotional wisdom to engage the offender so as not to risk severing the relationships. Thus, the emotional labor for community partners entails not only pointing out the racist behavior and educating others on systemic racism but also remaining calm to comply with professional norms while dealing with one's own personal feelings of rage or frustration.

These insights illuminate interdependencies within the uneven power dynamics of community–university partnerships. For community partners, sharing their expertise with academics to co-create knowledge involves navigating professional norms, epistemic hierarchies, and even managing others' discomfort. Thus, when engaging in these partnerships, it is important to examine how, emotional labor, for those who have endured histories of abuse and exploitation, can become another form of oppression. Acting upon this awareness represents emotional wisdom, which is vital to collaboratively repair harmful environments.

This case study focuses on the emotional labor of three fellows in the EJLP and six program managers across 4 years as they navigated uneven partnerships and hegemonic academic culture. Although many authors have pointed out the power imbalances in forging these partnerships, we attend to this relationality as a form of emotional labor, which is required to sustain community–university partnerships. Our purpose is to shed light on how to develop emotional wisdom in these partnerships. Doing so can help heal past relationships of harms with community members already facing the traumas of histories of social

and environmental injustices. Drawing on frameworks of procedural justice, critical race theory, and feminist theories of knowledge production, this case study analyzes the emotional labor that several community partners and the program managers underwent and the emotional wisdom developed in four cycles of community–university partnerships. We argue that building community–university partnerships capable of healing relationships with each other and with our environments, requires program managers and researchers to leverage their more privileged positionalities to support community partners in ways that ease their emotional labor and cultivate their own emotional wisdom. In the end, we provide recommendations to program managers and researchers on how to build emotional wisdom, reduce the emotional labor burden on community partners, and foster more liberatory outcomes.

THEORETICAL FRAMING

More and more, scholars are recognizing the potential of community–university partnerships in tackling social and environmental problems by engaging community members in more accurate and just knowledge-making practices.⁹ Scholars from feminism, critical race theory, as well as community partners have pointed out the importance of attending to power dynamics in these partnerships to create more equitable relationships.¹⁰ Rooted

⁹Christopher Bacon, Saneta de Vuono-Powell, Mary Louise Frampton, Tony LoPresti and Camille Pannu. "Introduction to Empowered Partnerships: Community-Based Participatory Action Research for Environmental Justice". *Environmental Justice* 6 (2023): 1–8. Carolina Balasz and Rachel Morello Frosch. "The Three Rs: How Community-Based Participatory Research Strengthens the Rigor, Relevance, and Reach of Science". *Environmental Justice* 6 (2013): 9–16. Freudenberg, N., M. Pastor, and B. Israel. 2011. "Strengthening Community Capacity to Participate in Making Decisions to Reduce Disproportionate Environmental Exposures." *American Journal of Public Health* 101(Suppl 1): S123–S130. Johnson Butterfield, Alice K., and Tracy M. Soska. "University-community partnerships: An introduction." *Journal of Community Practice* 12, nos 3–4 (2004): 1–11. Jonathan K. London, Kirsten Schwarz, Mary L. Cadenasso, Bethany B. Cutts, Charles Mason Jr, Jeanette Lim, Katie Valenzuela-Garcia, and Heather Smith. "Weaving community-university research and action partnerships for environmental justice." *Action Research* 16, no. 2 (2018): 173–189. Penny A. Pasque. "Collaborative Approaches to Community Change." In *Handbook of Engaged Scholarship. Contemporary Landscapes, Future Directions. Volume Two: Community-Campus Partnerships*. Edited by Hiram E. Fitzgerald, Cathy Burack, and Sarena D. Seifer (East Lansing MI: Michigan State University Press, 2010), 295–310. Wilson, Sacoby, Dayna Campbell, Laura Dalemarré, Herb Fraser-Rahim, and Edith Williams. 2014. "A Critical Review of an Authentic and Transformative Environmental Justice and Health Community — University Partnership" *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 11, no. 12: 12817–12834. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph111212817>

¹⁰Wilma Brakefield Caldwell, Angela G. Reyes, Zachary Rowe, Julia Weinert, and Barbara A. Israel. "Community partner perspectives on benefits, challenges, facilitating factors, and lessons learned from community-based participatory research

⁸Michael Muhammad, Nina Wallerstein, Andrew L. Sussman, Magdalena Avila, Lorenda Belone, and Bonnie Duran. "Reflections on researcher identity and power: The impact of positionality on community based participatory research (CBPR) processes and outcomes." *Critical sociology* 41, nos 7–8 (2015): 1045–1063.

in histories of exploitation or abuse, as well as in epistemic hierarchies that privilege academic knowledge over lived experience, such partnerships risk reproducing structural oppression and deepening harm. Overwhelmingly, academia is an institution that has been shaped by cultural values and systems that are grounded in white, Western supremacy and colonialism.¹¹ By participating in epistemic hierarchies that privilege modern scientific epistemologies and professionalist norms, individuals of different identities—even those who do not identify as white—may reproduce whiteness as a cultural norm that subordinates underrepresented groups, particularly people of color.¹² Community partners frequently feel mistreated and belittled by academic institutions and researchers.¹³ When community members perceive their lived experiences as undervalued in academic spaces,¹⁴ they may feel out of place and struggle to be taken seriously, which puts them at a disadvantage when negotiating their relationships with researchers. Such dynamics can damage community–university partnerships and expand inequities.

Feminist scholars have unsettled traditional notions of scientific objectivity and neutrality, emphasizing that all knowledge is embodied, situated, and partial.¹⁵ By including the standpoints of marginalized groups, feminists contend that science can actually provide more accurate and objective descriptions of the world.¹⁶ Along

this line of thought, emotions are integral to how we construct and understand the world.

Hochschild's concept of *emotional labor*—the managing and regulating of one's emotions to meet a workplace's acceptable manners or "feeling rules"¹⁷—is crucial for understanding how community–university partnerships are shaped and sustained. These interpersonal collaborations often require significant emotional labor to maintain polite and cordial relationships that can endure rigid academic norms and knowledge hierarchies and grapple with histories of oppression that structure higher education. Despite its centrality, emotional labor is routinely invisibilized or trivialized, with the burden disproportionately shifted onto women and other marginalized groups—particularly people of color. Throughout the EJ movement, this emotional labor—a form of carework—is also disproportionately borne by those in less privileged positions, predominantly women and people of color.¹⁸ Hochschild distinguishes *emotional labor*, exchanged for a wage, from *emotion work*, carried out in private life and unpaid. Given the permeable boundaries between public and private life for this analysis, we use the terms *emotional labor*, *emotion management*, and *emotion work* interchangeably. We also introduce the notion of "emotional wisdom," defined as the ability to perceive, attend to, and respond to the emotional needs of another person.

As university initiatives try to address structural inequities, an expanding body of literature tracks how emotional labor from these efforts is unevenly distributed among social groups. New studies show that the burden and emotional labor of equity work in academic settings mostly fall on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) employees.¹⁹ Ahmed has written extensively on how this

partnerships in Detroit." *Progress in community health partnerships: research, education, and action* 9, no. 2 (2015): 299–311. Iliana C. Livstrom, Amy Smith, Mary Rogers and Karl Hakansan. "Decolonizing Research and Urban Youth Work Through Community–University Partnerships". *Interdisciplinary Journal of Partnership Studies* 5 (2018): 1–24. Linda Tuhiwai Smith. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 2nd ed. (London, Zed Books, 2012).

¹¹Azeezat Johnson. "An academic witness: White supremacy within and beyond academia." *The fire now: Anti-racist scholarship in times of explicit racial violence* (2018): 15–25.

¹²Kimberly A. Bates and Eddy S. Ng. "Whiteness in academia, time to listen, and moving beyond White fragility." *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal* 40, no. 1 (2021): 1–7. Girish Daswani. "On the whiteness of academia." *Everyday Orientalism* 17 (2021).

¹³Devon C. Payne-Sturges, Gilbert C. Gee, and Deborah A. Cory-Slechta. "Confronting racism in environmental health sciences: moving the science forward for eliminating racial inequities." *Environmental health perspectives* 129, no. 5 (2021): 055002.

¹⁴Emma Goldberg. "Earth Science Has a Whiteness Problem." *New York Times*, (December 23, 2019). Shelley Fisher Fishkin "Interrogating 'Whiteness,' Complicating 'Blackness': Remapping American Culture." *American Quarterly* 47 (1995): 428–66. George Lipsitz. "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: Racialized Social Democracy and the 'White' Problem in American Studies." *American Quarterly* 47 (1995): 369–387. Chanda Prescod-Weinstein. "Making Black Women Scientists under White Empiricism: The Racialization of Epistemology in Physics." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 45 (2020): 421–447. Christopher D. E. Willoughby. "White Supremacy Was at the Core of 19th-Century Science. Why That Matters Today." *Washington Post*. (April 22, 2019).

¹⁵Donna Haraway. "Situated knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14 (Autumn, 1988): 575–599.

¹⁶Sandra Harding. "Feminist standpoint epistemology." in *The gender and science reader* eds. Muriel Lederman and Ingrid Bartsch, (New York, Routledge, 2001), 145–168. Patricia Hill Collins. "Standpoint theory revisited: Where's the power." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 22 (1997): 375–381.

¹⁷Arlie Russell Hochschild. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 1983).

¹⁸J.M. Bacon and Kari Martin Norgaard. "Emotions of Environmental Injustice." In *Lessons in Environmental Justice: From Civil Rights to Black Lives Matter to Idle No More*, 110–126. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2021). Shirley Rainey and Glenn S. Johnson. "Grassroots Activism: An Exploration of Women of Color's Role in the Environmental Justice Movement." *Race, Gender & Class* 16 nos 3–4 (2009): 144–173. Rachel Stein. *New Perspectives on Environmental Justice: Gender, Sexuality, and Activism*. (Piscataway, NJ, Rutgers University Press, 2004).

¹⁹Joy Marie Doan and Rahni B. Kennedy. "Diversity Fatigue: Acknowledging and Moving Beyond Repetitious Emotional Labor". In *Practicing Social Justice in Libraries*. Edited by Alyssa Brisset and Diana Moronta. (New York, Routledge, 2023), 145–153. Darsella Vigil, Elizabeth Holcombe, Natsumi Ueda and Adrianna Kezar. *Emotional Labor in Shared Equity Leadership Environments: Creating Emotionally Supportive Spaces*. (Washington D.C., American Council on Education, 2023). <<https://www.acenet.edu/News-Room/Pages/Supporting-Emotions-Equity-Leaders.aspx>> (Last accessed on October 10, 2024).

emotional inequity is a feature of institutional structures that perpetuate the status quo rather than transform systems to prevent the disproportionate burden of labor on BIPOC scholars and women/nonbinary faculty.²⁰ In the context of community–university partnerships, emotional labor helps maintain effective interactions between academic institutions and community members. These partnerships require navigating complex social dynamics—including competing objectives and opposing political views—while fostering trust and collaboration.

Case study design

In a conversation with UCD Institute of Transportation Studies (ITS) Director Daniel Sperling, consultant Selika Josiah Talbott, JD, envisioned a program that brought together community environmental justice leaders with academia to provide support, cohesion, collaboration, and an understanding of the role of communities in advancing new mobility. The goal was to create a program that served as a bridge, despite academia often being exploitative and extractive in dealing with community justice leaders.

Prospective doctoral ITS candidate Patricia Arnal-Luna and EJ Policy Analyst Juan Carlos Garcia Sanchez shaped the program principles. The purpose was to create a space for researchers and the selected community leaders working in community-based organizations to authentically share knowledge. Grounding assumptions were (1) communities have extensive knowledge that is widely disregarded by academics and policymakers, (2) academic research often fails to reach EJ groups, and (3) EJ organizations could benefit from a stronger technical expertise and broader professional networks. In seeking to persuade potential sponsors that community activists are just as knowledgeable about environmental issues as renowned professors, Arnal-Luna and Garcia Sanchez were met with doubt, resistance, underpayment for project management work, and lack of recognition—which further deepened their conviction that the project was needed. Acquiring adequate funding for the project and navigating financial bureaucracies would be a continued challenge for program managers and an area of significant emotional labor.

The program became a partnership between ITS, the Energy Efficiency Institute (EEI), and the Feminist Research Institute (FRI). Sarah Reboloso McCullough (FRI Associate Director), Josiah Talbott, and Garcia Sanchez were appointed program managers. In January 2022, the program launched with a cohort of 10 EJ Leaders who were brought into dialogue with the UCD research community for a 9-month paid fellowship program. The goal was for EJ Leaders to collaborate with

university researchers to complete a project of benefit to their community. The cohorts visited UCD three times, while the rest of the program took place virtually, meeting biweekly. Program managers were well-versed in best practices of community engagement and experienced in areas of EJ and social justice. The partnering researchers (from ITS and EEI) had technical expertise, but less experience with incorporating histories of oppression into their research and collaborating with community partners from disproportionately burdened backgrounds. This knowledge disparity intensified the need for significant emotional labor from the EJ Leaders and the program managers who mediated the relationship. Since then, there have been three more cohorts. In total, 24 EJ Leaders have participated in the program—21 of whom identify as BIPOC and 17 as women. At different points, the program has been run by five program managers—including an external consultant, three staff, and a graduate student—four identify as BIPOC, and four as women. The prevalence of BIPOC and women doing the emotion work of community–university partnerships points to more systemic patterns of how this work is gendered and racialized.

METHODOLOGY

Reflecting on their experience and their conversations with former and current EJ Leaders, the program managers identified the emotional labor that they and the EJ Leaders had carried out. Program managers invited EJ Leaders who had expressed an interest in academic writing to meet about a possible collaboration. Three EJ Leaders—one from each cohort—showed interest and the capacity to collaborate given that coauthorship was uncompensated and would demand additional time from their paid jobs. The program managers and the EJ Leaders agreed on the topic of analysis and writing responsibilities. Given their theoretical expertise and scholarly duties, the program managers would provide the theoretical framework, conduct the analysis, and assume responsibility for leading the publication. EJ Leaders and program managers wrote a brief reflection (500–1000 words) on the emotional labor they experienced and recommendations for future community–university partnerships. The authors wove these reflections together to analyze their emotional labor and how the program managers made changes to the program. Drafts were reviewed by EJ Leaders and their revisions were integrated. The final submission and submitted revisions were approved by all authors.

We recognize the limitations to this article. Although all of the program managers are authors, only three out of 24 EJ Leaders have collaborated. The perspectives of the EJ Leaders reflect their own experiences, not their respective cohorts. The authors recognize that the limited participation of the EJ Leaders in this article may be due to a lack of capacity or interest in academic publications and/or even in collaborating or maintaining relationships with the university partners. Nevertheless, the

²⁰Sara Ahmed. *Complaint!* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021). Sara Ahmed. *On Being included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012). Sara Ahmed. *What's the Use?: On the Uses of Use*. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019).

reflections included here do derive from numerous conversations with other EJ Leaders and researchers.

Case study results

Year 1: Emotion work is underestimated in bridging different ways of knowing. The first year of the program was both challenging and rewarding for the EJ Leaders, the program managers, and the researchers. Following participatory methodologies, the program managers co-created the program with the inaugural cohort. Significant challenges arose due to a rushed timeline and stark differences in positionalities and worldviews between university representatives and EJ Leaders. At the beginning of the program, the program managers warned participants about potential challenges inherent to the developing nature of the program. From the perspective of fellow and coauthor Rosas, the cohort faced difficult conversations with academic partners, characterized by an unprepared curriculum, inconsistent scheduling, and deeper issues like building trust, addressing tokenization, and aligning expectations. Program managers underestimated the depth of emotional labor—such as frustration, stress, and mistrust, required from EJ leaders to navigate academic spaces, particularly when those structures failed to fully integrate the fellows' real-world experiences.

This observation accords with the experience of program managers, who struggled to bridge the vast cultural divides and power dynamics between researchers and EJ Leaders—often resulting in difficult interactions and missteps. For example, when Rosas raised initial concerns about these dynamics, program managers dismissed them. This not only stifled their input but also spotlighted the broader problem of inequitable dialogue within the program. Such interactions often placed fellows in a disadvantaged position, compelling EJ Leaders to conform more frequently to academic frameworks that prioritized institutional goals over genuine engagement. Similarly, in a session designed for EJ Leaders to share their lived experiences, researchers acknowledged their expertise superficially. Researchers acknowledged the EJ Leaders' "courage" in confronting environmental injustices. However, some EJ Leaders viewed this framing as problematic as it individualizes struggle and praises those who "succeed" without challenging how structural violence operates. Such a response undervalued community knowledge and foreclosed opportunities for meaningful dialogue while reproducing traditional academic hierarchies that marginalize lived experience. It also enables researchers to avoid the emotional discomfort of examining their own potential complicity and/or privilege. This avoidance of emotional labor thus increased the load on EJ Leaders as they were left feeling tokenized, unheard, and undervalued—experiences that can be both hurtful and alienating.²¹

Such feelings hinder the capacity to connect and cultivate the trust needed for community–university partnerships.

Halfway through the program, the program managers and EJ Leaders began engaging in more honest conversations, enabling participants to express their feelings and take a more active role in the rest of the program. As the program managers became more aware of the discomfort experienced by the EJ Leaders and their own ambivalence about the program's direction, they reflected on their own positionalities and roles in upholding or challenging institutional hierarchies. Program managers began to be more transparent emotionally, sharing their own discomfort and struggles navigating the systemic challenges that arose while running the program. Located within an R1 university, the program managers felt pressure to meet the implicit and explicit expectations of a competitive research culture—a culture that does not align with the goals of the program.

As other authors have found,²² when program managers genuinely shared these experiences, trust with EJ fellows grew as they came to better know the values and intentions of the program managers and the similar struggles they faced. Through honest and constructive interactions that acknowledged the EJ Leaders' struggles, the emotional burden on EJ Leaders was lessened. This openness alleviated much of the apprehension EJ Leaders were feeling and fostered a more supportive environment, significantly enhancing the program. Moving through conflict and discomfort enabled deeper trust and the development of emotional wisdom that would benefit subsequent years of the program.

Year 2: Emotion work for community-building. After observing how building partnerships across knowledge systems requires considerable emotional work from community partners and that community-building among the EJ Leaders was a key program benefit, the program managers prioritized cultivating a robust sense of community among the cohort. They trained the EJ Leaders on effectively communicating their stories to researchers and government audiences. Nevertheless, sharing one's lived experiences and ways of viewing the world has emotional contours. For EJ advocates, EJ work requires sharing stories of suffering, debilitation, and death related to ongoing pollution of their own communities, often with people who are unaware of the health impacts caused by ongoing slow violence. Community advocates must navigate the discomfort of raising awareness and building alliances with diverse groups of people, including polluters. Thus, the communities who are suffering the effects of oppression and slow violence are interdependent with powerful polluters who may feel emotionally and ethically detached from the harms they are responsible for. Sharing personal narratives of environmental violence, suffering, and injustice can

²¹Adia Harvey Wingfield and John Harvey Wingfield. "When visibility hurts and helps: How intersections of race and gender shape Black professional men's experiences with tokenization." *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology* 20 (2014): 483–490.

J. Shim. "Token Fatigue: Tolls of Marginalization in White Male Spaces." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 44 (202): 1115–1134.

²²Community-Campus Partnerships for Health. Principles of Good Community-Campus Partnerships. Available online: <http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/commbas.html> (accessed 20 July 2012).

be powerful in creating emotional connections with others, bringing attention to overlooked or marginalized issues, and mobilizing change—but it can also be emotionally exhausting for those sharing.²³ It is vital for university partners to provide community partners the support, respect, and consideration needed. The emotional labor that the EJLP entailed for EJ Leaders was similar to the emotional labor required in EJ organizing as they both require sharing the stories of pollution and oppression in their communities. The program managers also had an understanding of EJ issues and organizing which made it easier for the EJ Leaders to share their stories. Although it is never easy to speak on the environmental injustices one's communities are facing, the EJ Leaders valued how this program offered them the opportunity to connect with each other and share their stories with the broader public, researchers, and decision makers. It was especially impactful for EJ Leaders living and working in California who had the opportunity to speak directly with state policymakers. Through the process of composing and narrating their stories, the EJ Leaders not only felt encouraged by each other and the program managers but also appreciative of the opportunity to connect with the attendants—particularly decision makers—turning emotional work into a constructive positive experience.

The emotional labor of sharing stories from below, whether in community–university partnerships or on-the-ground EJ work, is a vital component of procedural justice. Storytelling has long been used across cultures to convey messages and teachings. Increasingly, they are recognized across disciplines as an important method to share knowledge that inspires action for climate justice. Individuals confronting power structures and systemic inequities can better support one another when they share a robust sense of collective experience and solidarity.²⁴ Although participants in year 2 bonded and strengthened their connections with each other and the program managers, they did not engage significantly with other researchers. This was an unmet program goal and a shortcoming pointed out by EJ Leaders and researchers alike.

At the end of year 2, external program manager Josiah Talbott ceased her involvement with the program due to the tiresome university payment processing systems that often delayed payment by months. This disrespectful and time-consuming process was a

significant drain on everyone's emotional labor. This exemplifies the endemic institutional inadequacies of valuing community partners' expertise in a timely and dignified fashion.²⁵ Financial challenges were compounded by the need for program managers to compete with other university initiatives to raise funds to keep the program alive. The departure of Josiah Talbott—who was an expert mentor, communications coach, and leader, along with fundraising stresses, demanded changes to the program structure.

Year 3: Lessening emotion work by building infrastructure. The goal of the third iteration of the program was to facilitate knowledge exchange²⁶ between the EJ Leaders and UCD researchers. Thus, EJ Leaders were matched with researchers. Previous years taught program managers that attempts to let such relationships emerge 'organically' required significant emotional labor on behalf of EJ Leaders. In year 3, the partnerships relied upon scaffolding or "building infrastructure,"²⁷ such as facilitated introductory meetings between the partners, structured meeting agendas, memoranda of understanding which established EJ Leaders as equal partners, and the creation of partnership agreements. Participating researchers were required to take part in trainings on histories of oppression in academia and doing community-engaged research methods.²⁸ Mayra Sanchez, a researcher of environmental justice, and graduate student Megan Williams joined the management team and helped redesign the program. An advisory board was formed composed of faculty and policymakers was established. This new structure was built on the strengths of a reconfigured management team and advisory board.

Developing explicit agreements and expectations and training researchers in histories of oppression and best practices in community-engaged research lessened EJ Leaders' emotional labor. Program managers facilitated conversations with the EJ Leaders that focused on power dynamics and how academic knowledge is produced. Coauthor Oxas remembers feeling "heartbroken" upon realizing how academic researchers exploit the oppression of BIPOC communities as material for research to

²³Liam Downey, Marieke Van Willigen, Environmental stressors: The mental health impacts of living near industrial activity, *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 46 (2005): 289–305. Stephanie Malin. "Depressed democracy, environmental injustice: Exploring the negative mental health implications of unconventional oil and gas production in the United States." *Energy Research & Social Science* 70 (2020): 101720. Mary K. Peek, M.P. Cutchin, D. Freeman, R.P. Stowe and James S. Goodwin. "Environmental hazards and stress: Evidence from the Texas city stress and health study." *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 63 (2009): 792–798. Anna J. Willow. The new politics of environmental degradation: Un/expected landscapes of disempowerment and vulnerability, *Journal of Political Ecology* 21 (2014): 237–257.

²⁴Sara Ahmed. *Complaint!*. (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2021).

²⁵Kristin Z. Black, Christina Yongue Hardy, Molly De Marco, Alice S. Ammerman, Giselle Corbie-Smith, Barbara Council, Danny Ellis, et al. "Beyond Incentives for Involvement to Compensation for Consultants." *Progress in Community Health Partnerships* 7, (2013): 263–270.

²⁶Sasha Costanza-Chock. *Design Justice: Community-Led Practices to Build the Worlds We Need*. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2020).

²⁷Sacoby Wilson, Dayna Campbell, Laura Dalemarré, Herb Fraser-Rahim, and Edith Williams. "A critical review of an authentic and transformative environmental justice and health community—University partnership." *International journal of environmental research and public health* 11, no. 12 (2014): 12817–12834.

²⁸These workshop trainings are based on the Asking Different Questions program. Kalindi Vora, Sarah McCullough and Sara Giordano. "Asking Different Questions in STEM Research: Feminist STS Approaches to STEM Pedagogy." *ADVANCE Journal* 3 (2022): 33675.

advance their careers—while often remaining emotionally detached from the personal lives of these community members.

In various ways, academics today benefit from publicly and privately funded research grounded on histories of dispossession. For one, UCD is situated on lands from which Indigenous ancestors were displaced. In addition, the socioenvironmental violence and injustices endured by Indigenous peoples and other marginalized communities often become the objects of study for many academics who may not be directly impacted by these issues. Furthermore, within a research project, academics are often trained to maintain a supposedly neutral stance in the name of science. Scientific research frequently disregards these histories and experiences under the principle of scientific objectivity and neutrality.²⁹ However, for Indigenous and other marginalized groups, Oxas finds that remembering and enduring the negative effects of intergenerational trauma from violent dispossession lingers in the body and leads to pain and other feelings of injustice.³⁰ Acknowledging these distinct relationships to histories of exploitation can be taxing to Indigenous peoples on their nervous system, who must endure the violences and injustices, constituting yet another form of dispossession.

If the goal is to repair damage to the planet and create a sustainable future, researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers must make space for BIPOC communities' ongoing struggles with oppression and their valuable knowledge. This process requires reimagining the conventional approach to academic research, aiming to prevent further harm and ensuring a more equitable distribution of emotion work and labor. To successfully heal trauma and improve the conditions of disenfranchised communities, there needs to be ample training for researchers on trauma-informed research, more intimate connection to the communities they write about and, more importantly, uplifting members directly from those communities to lead the research with full and ample funding. Power differentials created by histories of oppression also create asymmetries in the emotional weight carried between those who benefit and those who suffer

from structural violence. Researcher training in these areas, as well as in community-based participatory research methodologies, can lessen the emotional burden experienced by disenfranchised communities in partnerships with universities. Taking a trauma-informed approach can help researchers develop the emotional wisdom to attend to people's experiences of environmental violence, loss, and suffering and move toward healing. Through these conversations, the EJLP begins to stretch and expand this dynamic in this positive direction.

Year 4: Toward healing collaborations. Program managers decided to only invite former EJ Leaders to apply for the fourth year. This decision was driven by two factors: a desire to strengthen relationships and a decrease in funding for the program. Initial investments in the program waned and identifying new sources for the vital work of relationship-building proved difficult and an ongoing source of emotional labor for program managers. In the new structure, applicants were expected to propose an EJ research project with a UCD researcher. The hope was that EJ Leaders could build from their existing connections with researchers they had met previously and deepen their relationships to serve their interests.

Returning EJ Leaders can witness the growth of both the program and themselves. Coauthor Rosas, who was a returning EJ Leader this year, expressed a positive experience as they no longer needed to prove the legitimacy of their knowledge and experiences in academic spaces, which demanded constant emotional navigation. In fact, the EJ Leaders directed the priorities and activities of their research projects. The program managers and academic researchers played supportive and mentorship roles but did not steer the content or outcomes of the projects. This new format better affirms the value of community knowledge and prioritizes experience as a legitimate and necessary foundation for research.

Although the first year entailed significant emotional work, maintaining meaningful relationships across time allowed Rosas and the other returning EJ Leaders to be more confident and empowered to take a more leading role in their partnership and in their research project. This structure validates the knowledge of EJ Leaders and places them on a more equal footing to that of the researchers. By participating in the program a second time, after several lessons learned, some of the harm from the first year was repaired. Having established relationships within the university, spending time on campus on several occasions, and learning to navigate the physical and institutional spaces, returning Leaders no longer felt like a stranger, but rather as a collaborator with a legitimate role and sense of belonging in an academic community.

Relationships not only take time but also require meaningful interactions and a structure built to intentionally guide the partnership. Trusting the EJ Leaders and their capacity to navigate the university, the program managers have taken a less prominent role in the partnership. Although the benefits are not equally mutual for the researchers, the concerns of the community partners are

²⁹Loraine Daston and Peter Galison. *Objectivity*. (Cambridge, MA, Zone Books, 2007). Elizabeth Anderson. "Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edited by Edward N. Zalta, (Palo Alto, Stanford University, Summer 2019). <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2019/entries/feminism-epistemology/>> (Last accessed on October 10, 2024).

³⁰William Aguiar and Regine Halseth. *Aboriginal peoples and historic trauma: The processes of intergenerational transmission*. National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health= Centre de collaboration nationale de la santé autochtone, 2015. <<https://www.ccsa-nccah.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/142/2015-04-28-AguiarHalseth-RPT-IntergenTraumaHistory-EN-Web.pdf>> (Last accessed Oct. 10, 2024). Carrie Bourassa, Melissa Blind, Devin Dietrich and Eric Oleson. "Understanding the intergenerational effects of colonization: Aboriginal women with neurological conditions—their reality and resilience." *International Journal of Indigenous Health* 10 (2015): 3–20.

prioritized. From the first to fourth year, the changes experienced in this program demonstrate how academic institutions can prioritize relationship-building and adapt to build research spaces that are inclusive and responsive to community leadership. We hope that these are lasting relationships that continue to adapt to the challenges ahead.

CONCLUSION

After nearly four cycles, program managers and EJ Leaders continue to reflect on the transformative yet challenging nature of EJ community–university partnerships. As discussed in this article, community partners from marginalized backgrounds often invest significant emotional work. This disparity perpetuates systemic inequalities and undermines the fundamental principles of justice and equity that these partnerships seek to advance. We call for a more critical perspective of how knowledge is produced as well as a more nuanced understanding of the emotional dimensions of collaborative work and advocate for institutional changes that recognize, value, and equitably distribute this crucial yet often overlooked form of labor. Bringing in community members into academic research partnerships must be done responsibly and respectfully, prioritizing community’s needs and contributions. This entails valuing and honoring people’s experiences and insights, integrating them into our research design and epistemologies, and redistributing labor in ways that facilitate healing from legacies of oppression. This healing cultivates emotional wisdom.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

1. **Center your community partners.** As program managers learned during the first year, it is critical to consider ways to genuinely prioritize the community’s well-being and liberation and seek to repair histories of abuse and injustice rather than over academic priorities.³¹ For instance, in year 4,

EJ Leaders led research projects that addressed issues in their communities. Engaging in community–university partnerships requires acknowledging how partners are interdependent yet unequal. Have honest conversations about how you benefit (or not) from the partnership and your ability to center your community partners—openly addressing any challenges, and limitations, and other associated risks.

2. **Respect and honor the wisdom and labor of your community partners.** Activists remind us that justice means “Nothing about us without us.”³² Working together with community partners toward environmental justice is essential for procedural justice.³³ Co-producing knowledge toward environmental justice involves recognizing the expertise of individuals from disproportionately burdened communities.³⁴ As an EJ Leader states, “It’s crucial that EJ Leaders are recognized as partners, not just data sources.” As part of recognizing the value of different standpoints,³⁵ program managers introduced researchers to feminist philosophies of knowledge-making, aiming to challenge epistemic hierarchies that privilege scientific knowledge over other ways of knowing. In addition, although the program managers were unable to promise any compensation, as future funding came up, the coauthoring EJ Leaders received a stipend for their insights and work on this piece.
3. **Learn trauma-informed research practices.**³⁶ As EJ Leaders have shared, it is difficult to be continually called on to share stories of trauma and environmental violence. Researchers can, through employing trauma-informed practices, develop and utilize emotional wisdom to better support their community partners impacted by environmental violence. The EJLP is seeking ways to incorporate this recommendation.

³¹Chandra Ford, and Collins O. Airhihenbuwa. “Critical race theory, race equity, and public health: toward antiracism praxis.” *American journal of public health* 100, no. S1 (2010): S30–S35. Francine Darroch and Audrey Giles. “Decolonizing health research: Community-based participatory research and postcolonial feminist theory.” *The Canadian Journal of Action Research* 15, no. 3 (2014): 22–36. bell Hooks. *Feminist theory: From margin to center*. Pluto press, 2000. Barbara Israel, Amy J. Shulz, Edith A. Parker, Adam B. Becker, Alex J. Allen, III, J. Ricardo Guzman, and Richard Lichtenstein. “Critical issues in developing and following CBPR principles.” *Community-based participatory research for health: Advancing social and health equity* 3 (2017): 32–35. Max Liboiron. *Pollution is colonialism*. Duke University Press, 2021. Linda Tuhiwai Smith. *Decolonizing research: Indigenous storywork as methodology*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019. Wallerstein, Nina, and Bonnie Duran. “The theoretical, historical and practice roots of CBPR.” *Community-based participatory research for health: Advancing social and health equity* 2 (2017): 25–46.

³²Dilara Yarbrough. ““Nothing about us without us”: Reading protests against oppressive knowledge production as guidelines for solidarity research.” *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 49, no. 1 (2020): 58–85.

³³Derek Bell, and Jayne Carrick. “Procedural environmental justice.” In *The Routledge handbook of environmental justice*, pp. 101–112. Routledge, 2017. Jonathan Skinner-Thompson. “Procedural environmental justice.” *Wash. L. Rev.* 97 (2022): 399.

³⁴Max Liboiron. *Pollution is colonialism*. Duke University Press, 2021.

³⁵Sandra Harding. “Feminist standpoint epistemology.” In *The gender and science reader* eds. Muriel Lederman and Ingrid Bartsch, (New York, Routledge, 2001), 145–168. Patricia Hill Collins. “Standpoint theory revisited: Where’s the power.” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 22 (1997): 375–381.

³⁶Isabelle Anguelovski. “New directions in urban environmental justice: Rebuilding community, addressing trauma, and remaking place.” *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 33, no. 2 (2013): 160–175. Chara Camponeschi, “Toward integrative resilience: a healing justice and trauma-informed approach to urban climate planning.” *Cities & Health* 6, no. 5 (2022): 960–973.

4. **Interrogate cultural norms, epistemic hierarchies, and basic assumptions within your academic field.**³⁷ EJ Leaders and program managers throughout the EJLP have emphasized the importance of considering different ways of knowing and conveying environmental issues—particularly lived experiences and emotional labor from below. Researchers should engage in discussions over histories, understandings, and communication of oppression and hierarchies of power as they relate to their area(s) of study. Value and recognize diverse ways of educating and sharing knowledge, such as storytelling. The program managers have trained researchers in feminist philosophies of knowledge production, which value various standpoints from the margins and challenge epistemic hierarchies, as well as participatory research methodologies.³⁸
5. **Reflect on your positionalities in relationship to others.** This includes our social identities, relations to privileges and oppression, values and worldviews, and assumptions about “others.”³⁹ As program managers reflected on their positionalities in year 1, they were more able to engage in more honest conversations and be more intentional about the power that they held in the context of the program.
6. **Build in time for relationship development, prioritizing process over product.**⁴⁰ Move at the speed of trust. Trust building takes significant time and effort that may extend beyond the timeline of

products. Appreciate the uneven emotion work necessary to sustain long-term, reciprocal relationships. Allow a year or more to cultivate trust and confront challenges, tensions, and mistakes. To many EJ leaders, authentic interest in this work begins with establishing a long-term commitment to integrating and supporting community priorities through existing efforts. For instance, fostering trust and relationship over several years has enabled EJ Leader Rosas to lead a research project in year 4.

7. **Foster cultural humility**⁴¹ and a willingness to experience discomfort⁴² and uncertainty when interacting with community partners. Such honest vulnerability can produce trust and deepen relationships and lessen the discomfort and additional emotional burden from community partners. As program managers have been learning, when mistakes are made, fully acknowledge them and work toward repair.
8. **Thoughtfully build infrastructure.**⁴³ Together, set clear expectations and boundaries from the onset for all participants in a partnership. Allow participants to create their own agreements and methods of collaborating. This should be an iterative process: ask for feedback and check in regularly with community partners and revise plans accordingly. It is important to establish in writing the recognition of equal partnerships to foster a mutual understanding, responsibility, and accountability in addressing power dynamics through ethical spaces.
9. **Provide multiyear funding and institutional support for timely payment.** Universities benefit from investing funding and staffing into relationship building with community leaders. This lessens the burden on program managers and on community partners.⁴⁴ Ensuring that payment systems are easy,

³⁷Patricia Hill Collins. *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. Routledge, 2022. Donna Haraway. “Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective 1.” *Women, science, and technology*. Routledge, 2013. 455–472. Sandra Harding. *Whose science? Whose knowledge?: Thinking from women’s lives*. Cornell University Press, 1991. Helen E. Longino. “Science as Social Knowledge (Princeton, NJ: Princeton).” (1990).

³⁸These workshop trainings are based on the Asking Different Questions program. Kalindi Vora, Sarah McCullough and Sara Giordano. “Asking Different Questions in STEM Research: Feminist STS Approaches to STEM Pedagogy.” *ADVANCE Journal* 3 (2022): 33675.

³⁹Patricia Hill Collins. *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. Routledge, 2022. Kimberlé W. Crenshaw. “Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine (pp. 139–168).” *University of Chicago legal forum*. Vol. 1. 1989. Donna Haraway. “Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective 1.” *Women, science, and technology*. Routledge, 2013. 455–472. Sandra Harding. *Whose science? Whose knowledge?: Thinking from women’s lives*. Cornell University Press, 1991. Sultana, F., 2007. Reflexivity, positionality and participatory ethics: Negotiating fieldwork dilemmas in international research. *ACME: An international journal for critical geographies*, 6(3), pp.374–385. Linda Tuhiwai Smith. *Decolonizing research: Indigenous storywork as methodology*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019.

⁴⁰Iliana C. Livstrom, Amy Smith, Mary Rogers and Karl Hakansan. “Decolonizing Research and Urban Youth Work Through Community-University Partnerships.” *Interdisciplinary Journal of Partnership Studies* 5 (2018): 1–24.

⁴¹Marcie Fisher-Borne, Jessie Montana Cain, and Suzanne L. Martin. “From mastery to accountability: Cultural humility as an alternative to cultural competence.” *Social Work Education* 34, no. 2 (2015): 165–181. Cynthia Foronda, Diana-Lyn Baptiste, Maren M. Reinholdt, and Kevin Ousman. “Cultural humility: A concept analysis.” *Journal of Transcultural Nursing* 27, no. 3 (2016): 210–217. Cynthia Foronda. “A theory of cultural humility.” *Journal of Transcultural Nursing* 31, no. 1 (2020): 7–12. Isaacson, Mary. “Clarifying concepts: Cultural humility or competency.” *Journal of Professional Nursing* 30, no. 3 (2014): 251–258. Mary Isaacson. “Clarifying concepts: Cultural humility or competency.” *Journal of Professional Nursing* 30, no. 3 (2014): 251–258.

⁴²Rachelle Chadwick. “On the politics of discomfort.” *Feminist Theory* 22, no. 4 (2021): 556–574 Helen F. Wilson. “Discomfort: Transformative encounters and social change.” *Emotion, Space and Society* 37 (2020): 100681.

⁴³Sacoby Wilson, Dayna Campbell, Laura Dalemarré, Herb Fraser-Rahim, and Edith Williams. “A critical review of an authentic and transformative environmental justice and health community—University partnership.” *International journal of environmental research and public health* 11, no. 12 (2014): 12817–12834.

⁴⁴Barbara A. Israel., Eugenia Eng, Amy J. Schulz, and Edith A. Parker. (Eds.). *Methods for Community-Based Participatory Research for Health* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass,

transparent, and responsive improves trust and lessens the load for program managers as well. Financial stress leads to inequitable emotional work on the part of both program managers and EJ Leaders. The EJLP lost a program manager for this reason. Programs of this kind risk reduced capacity and longevity if they cannot provide timely, reliable payment to staff and participants. Currently, McCullough is advocating for more transparent and simple payment procedures within the institution and seeking grant funding to pursue this more systemically.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

M.S.B.: Formal analysis, project administration, writing—original draft, and writing—review and editing (lead); M.T.W.: Formal analysis and writing—original draft; R.R.: investigation; K.P.C.: Investigation; R.O.: Investigation; P.A.-L.: Funding acquisition and investigation; J.C.G.S.: Funding acquisition and investigation; S.J.T.: Funding acquisition and investigation; S.R.M.: Conceptualization (lead), funding acquisition, methodology, supervision, and writing—review and editing (supporting).

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