With a growing alumni network of families who have participated in We Stories’ Family Learning Program, the Alumni Steering Committee was initiated to take the lead in forming a more cohesive and active alumni community. We Stories believes in strengthening their alumni community to form a critical mass of families who are invested in creating more racially equitable systems across the region and the U.S.

Evaluating the effects of We Stories’ Alumni Engagement

1. **Purpose of evaluation**
   
   Since its inception, the co-founders and the Alumni Steering Committee have implemented several strategies to cultivate an actively engaged and cohesive alumni community, which prioritizes racial justice advocacy. Though these efforts are still in their nascent phase, it is pertinent to evaluate the early effects of these strategies from the perspective of the alumni to understand the main pathways of change. **The purpose of this evaluation is to understand the type of changes that alumni members have experienced since their involvement with We Stories, and the factors that have facilitated or hindered their sustained engagement, in comparison with the organization’s theory of change.** The findings aim to support the efforts of the alumni steering committee as well as better inform future evaluation of We Stories’ programs.

2. **Questions**
   
   The evaluation focused on three key questions:
   
   1. What are the significant changes in thinking/behavior that alumni members have experienced?
   2. What are the factors supporting/hindering these changes?
   3. How does the organization’s theory of change compare with alumni members’ perception of change?

3. **Stakeholders and Methods**
   
   The evaluation used **structured group model building workshops** as a method to engage a) co-founders of We Stories and b) alumni members who have been actively engaged in the organization’s activities over two separate sessions. The workshops comprised a set of structured activities, known as ‘Graphs over time’ and ‘Causal mapping’ to guide the discussion on the above key questions.

**Evaluation of We Stories’ Alumni Engagement (Oct – Dec 2017)**

Prepared by Elia Kanak Rajah, MSW Practicum Student
4 Key Insights

Significant changes experienced by Alumni:
- Growing awareness of racial inequities in systems
- Strengthening relationships or relationship conflict
- Sense of community/connectedness with other We Stories members
- Increasing confidence to act to address racial inequity
- Increased participation in individual and collective racial justice advocacy actions

Constraints to sustaining engagement in racial justice advocacy:
- Loss of energy as they engage in more actions
- Increasing guilt over missing time with family, leading to change in priorities

Figure 1 Simplified model of alumni’s perception of change

5 Implications and Recommendations

Community-building is an important aspect of growing the network of alumni, and to sustain their energy and commitment to racial justice advocacy.

Family-friendly action opportunities provides integrated spaces for families to participate in racial justice advocacy, thus reducing members’ guilt over missing time with spouses and children.

Leadership capacity-building is integral to the sustainability of We Stories and the racial justice efforts they are involved in. Organizational policy should thus support capacity-building of alumni to take on leadership roles.

Funding for sustaining alumni engagement is currently minimal/absent. To leverage the power of the alumni community to create regional change, dedicated and sustainable funding is needed for the Alumni Steering Committee.

Future evaluation may focus on tracking types of racial justice actions members are taking through a periodic online survey, collecting stories of “I did, and you can too” or “I did, and I’m still standing”.

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