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Disability, Diversity, and Intersectionality (DDI): Making New Friends and Playing Well with Others

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IL-NET is a project of Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU) in partnership with the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL), the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL), and Utah State University Center for Persons with Disabilities (USU-CPD)

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Visit the ILRU Disability, Diversity, and Intersectionality in CILs website at CIL-diversity.org to find the nine CIL case studies and other information gathered from this project.

Disability, Diversity and Intersectionality (DDI) Project



- Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU) in collaboration with Public Research and Evaluation Services (PRES) conducted a three-phase research study entitled, Disability, Diversity, and Intersectionality (DDI) project.
- The study was designed to determine how centers for independent living are designing, implementing, and evaluating culturally and linguistically competent policies and practices to improve services, programs and outreach for racially/ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse groups.

DDI Project: Definitions Used

- **Diversity**: Differences in culture, ethnic or racial classification, self-identification, tribal or clan affiliation, nationality, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, education, religion, spirituality, physical and intellectual abilities, personal appearance and other factors that distinguish one group or individual from another.
(Adapted from Goode & Jackson, 2009)
- **Intersectionality**: The multiple social group memberships and identities that expose an individual to different types of discrimination and disadvantage.
(Sue, Rasheed and Rasheed, 2016)

Sites Selected for Case Studies



- **Access Living** (Chicago, Illinois) – Marca Bristo
- **Center for Independence of the Disabled in New York** (Manhattan, New York) – Susan Dooha
- **Central Coast Center for Independent Living** (Salinas, California) – Elsa Quezada
- **Central Iowa Center for Independent Living** (Des Moines, Iowa) – Reyma McDeid
- **Community Resources for Independent Living** (Hayward, California) – Ron Halog
- **disABILITY Link** (Atlanta, Georgia) – Kim Gibson
- **Illinois/Iowa Independent Living Center** (Illinois/Iowa: Rock Island, Illinois) – Liz Sherwin
- **IndependenceFirst** (Milwaukee, Wisconsin) – Lee Schulz
- **Metropolitan Center for Independent Living** (St. Paul, Minnesota) – Jesse Gomez

What You Will Learn Today...

- Disability, diversity, and intersectionality (DDI) as a process requiring focused time and effort.
- How to identify potential partners and collaborators who represent diverse communities, and social justice and civil rights organizations.
- Strategies for effective coalition-building that enhance capacity of all partners.
- Successful outreach strategies with DDI partners for engaging consumers, staff, potential board members, and volunteers in diverse communities.
- Strategies for problem-solving when partners' priorities are not in alignment.

What are Our Personal Journeys of DDI?

Elsa Quezada, Executive Director (CCCIL)

- Born and raised in Watsonville, California.
- Parents were born in Mexico and were farmworkers with not much formal education but strongly believed in education.
- My 3 siblings and I are first generation born in this country who were reared with strong work ethic and strong belief in maintaining our language (Spanish) and culture (Mexican).
- We are bilingual/bicultural with a strong belief in social justice and equality and respect for all.

Elsa's Journey to Disability, Diversity & Intersectionality, cont'd.



- My parents strongly encouraged us to maintain our "first language" and to be proud of being bicultural.
- All siblings worked in the fields during summer.
- Parents wanted us to experience what it would be like if we did not get an education. We not only learned that it was not what we wanted to do but more importantly we learned first hand the hardships and often the injustices that "campesinos" experienced.

Elsa's Journey to Disability, Diversity & Intersectionality, cont'd. 2



- This led to interest in social justice. In 1981, when my husband was 31 years of age and we had our year and a half son, he was diagnosed with seminoma...malignant cancer. Then began the next phase of our life and we walked into the world of disability rights. Encountered all the discrimination, stigma, lack of access to health care, etc., etc.
- My path took a different direction and I entered the independent living movement. On 9/1/18, I will have celebrated 37 years in our movement.

What are our Personal Journeys of DDI?

Ron Halog, Executive Director (CRIL)

- Born in Livermore CA, raised in Pleasanton, CA.
- Filipino family living in a rural, agricultural community in California in the 50's and 60's.
- Mom and Dad and my 3 older sisters immigrated from the Philippines; my brother and I were born in California.
- They wanted me and my brother and sisters to only speak English so that we fit in the community.
- My journey shaped my beliefs: "A person is judged on their character not the color of their skin."

Ron's Journey to Disability, Diversity & Intersectionality



- Education was very important to my parents. They wanted all the children to graduate from college.
- My mom always told me: “Respect the person first; if they disrespect don't respect them.”
- Had great friends growing up, but also had people who didn't like me because of my ethnicity.
- Growing up, I was called names and picked on.
- As I grew, I learned to fight, both physically and verbally; my first taste of self advocacy.
- I learned that we are all different, but with similar wants and dreams.

How Did We Prepare our Organizations for the Journey? CCCIL



- Was ED of the first bilingual/bicultural independent living center in East LA, California in 1981. The early history of the movement was believed to have been was by white guys in wheelchairs. There were no leaders "of color" and the concept of independent living did not coincide with the Latino culture which is about family and much more focused on the unit as opposed to the individual.
- Listened to the families who said that the philosophy did not fit with their culture.
- Changed the services that fit the culture that we were working with.

How Did We Prepare our Organizations for the Journey? CCCIL, cont'd.



- Educated leaders in our movement that we ourselves were "excluding" members of our own community.
- Developed board and staff reflect your community.
- Involved community members in making sure that services address the needs of the community and are offered in a culturally appropriate manner.
- Look at governance and staff...did it reflect our community?
- All materials needed to be in languages spoken in the community. Language and culture must be respected as we ask those to respect our disability culture and languages (sign language, etc.).

How Did We Prepare our Organizations for the Journey? CCCIL, cont'd. 2

- Community partners – did we have everyone at the table? Were we accessible to EVERYONE?
- “Our community is our office.”



How Did We Prepare our Organizations for the Journey? CRIL



- Close look at our current staff – were we reaching out to all communities in our county?
 - Who were we connected with and how do we strengthen that connection?
 - We then looked at Alameda County demographics—one of the most diverse counties in America.
 - We asked ourselves, how does our staff and consumer base match the county's percentages?
- We looked at groups that we were not serving and asked why weren't we serving them?

How Did We Prepare our Organizations for the Journey? CRIL, cont'd.



- Third, we made plans and took steps to address this short fall:
 - Needed staff who can speak the language.
 - Developed written material in specific languages.
 - Introduced ourselves to other organizations that serve the specific population – potential collaboration.
 - Reviewed our services and targeted services that could benefit other organizations – how to link our services with the population, what needs are we not meeting?

How Did We Prepare our Organizations for the Journey? CRIL, cont'd. 2

Getting to the right “tables”:

- Time to get uncomfortable – go to meetings and share your services.
- A flyer is great but it won't bring people to you.
- Word of mouth always works best – especially if that consumer was successful in the goal (find housing, a job etc.).
- Go to the people, don't wait for them to come to you.
- Use your services as a tool to get to groups; Device Lending Library, Emergency Preparedness Training, etc.

Questions & Discussion

How Did We Find Partners for the Journey?



CRIL

- CRIL Management started with staff, board members and consumer connections – is anybody on a board or group? Let's tap into our current connections – Intersectionality.
- Identified CRIL services that could be promoted to the full community and promoted it to people and groups that we already worked with.
- Invited ourselves to the table!
- Looked for grants that specify funding for a specific group for a specific service; example: Hindu Funding for flu shots.

How Did We Find Partners for the Journey?



CRIL, cont'd.

- Kept going to the group meetings, made it a point to share CRIL's value to its consumers.

Finding Partners for the Journey – CRIL

- Ask to present to groups, maybe a 30 minute presentation – make it fun – they will remember you.
 - Example: CRIL has been asked to give presentations on CRIL's services to different groups: senior services groups, Disaster Preparedness / Sheriff groups, Hard of Hearing / Deaf groups, etc. CRIL has a PowerPoint presentation that is always ready to give. There are 3 objectives for these presentations; 1. Learn about CRIL Services, 2. Give them access to over 1 million dollars in devices and 3. Save their life. Some groups have asked CRIL to return to present again.

- Example: One group was at the Tech Ability Conference in Oakland which had 3 hour-long workshop tracks. CRIL was scheduled at the end of the day track. There were about 30 people. Although it was at the end of the day, CRIL staff fully engaged the group with its energy. We left the conference feeling like everyone enjoyed and received some great takeaways from the presentation. A month later, CRIL was contacted by the Alameda County HR Employee Group which had many staff present at the workshop. They liked it so much, they decided to make CRIL their organization to support for the holiday season and secured over \$3000 in donations for CRIL – all because of a presentation. Just recently another person that saw the presentation donated a scooter and wheelchair to CRIL.

Finding Partners for the Journey – CRIL, cont'd.



- Volunteer to support groups. This is all about relationship building. Remember to build strong relationships; there is a give and get process.
- How many boards or groups are you currently serving on? What about your Management Team; Program Directors and Staff Members?

Finding Partners for the Journey – CRIL, cont'd. 2



- Often times, Staff members are one of the best resources to have to tap into different communities. Advantage is that the staff is already known in the community and may often time already speak the language! This is a great start.

Example – Emphasis on Bi-Lingual

- Example: As positions became available, CRIL management made it a point to prioritize the positions to be bi-lingual to support Alameda County's communities. *See example next slide.*

Example – Emphasis on Bi-Lingual, cont'd.



During CRIL's search for an IL Coordinator at Fremont Office, management team looked at ethnic backgrounds in the area and saw a large population of unserved Afghan consumers. CRIL designed a job posting to reflect focus of a bi-lingual candidate "Encouraged to apply" and "Bi-lingual preferred." After 8 months, candidate pool narrowed to top 3 people who were all bi-lingual, with connections to the population CRIL wanted to reach.

The person best fitting needs and job description was already heavily involved in the Afghan community. Because of this connection, CRIL's new IL Coordinator has exceeded service goals in the Tri-Cities area. The Afghan Coalition recently invited CRIL to give a workshop on Emergency Preparedness Training. Although presenters don't speak Farsi, the CRIL IL Coordinator translated the presentation to the group. CRIL's Housing Search Coordinator is also able to reach out to the Afghan Community with the support of CRIL IL Coordinator's translation.

Finding Partners for the Journey – CRIL, cont'd. 3

- Some of CRIL's services also have support groups within the service; ex. Senior services, Advocacy Groups (East Bay Legislative Committee)
 - Ex.: Referral of CRIL Services, CRIL is asked to be at table.
- Share your services with legislators. Local, State, and Federal Legislators are a great resource to tap into other communities.
 - Ex.: When legislators or staff know about the services, they often refer constituents to CRIL—a great path into many communities.



How Did We Find Partners for the Journey?

CCCIL



- Looked at all community partners...form collaborative partnerships that CCCIL could infiltrate and present disability issues all the while recognizing and calling our similarities (Intersectionality)
 - *See example on next slide.*

Look at all Community Partners – Example



CCCIL was asked to join the board of a low income housing developer focused on housing for farmworkers. CCCIL joined with the idea of creating a new collaboration opportunity with an agency building much needed housing but were narrowly focusing on "farmworker" housing. This was an opportunity to teach that many farmworkers were individuals who might have a disability—the CIL was seeing consumers who had sustained a work-related injury and now filing for worker's compensation.

CCCIL also knew many farmworkers with family members, children, extended family members who had hypertension, mental health disabilities, and diabetes who did not identify as individuals with disabilities and often did not speak English nor understand the complex navigation of systems. After serving as a board member and Chair for two years, this developer is now designing developments with "access for all" in mind.

- Work on the issues that partners are working on and demonstrate honesty, commitment, long term relationships.
 - CHISPA – housing for farm workers then included people with disabilities and elders. Low income housing became accessible.
- CCAH - medical managed care health plan. What do members need?

How Did We Strengthen and Sustain this Journey through Potholes and Rough Patches? CCCIL

- Established and maintained personal relationships and when there was a change in leadership, reached out and started again. This is never ending and a part of our culture.
- Collaborated with partners on potential projects, whether there was \$ for CCCIL or not, as \$ is equally as important as the partnership.
 - *See example next slide.*



Example – Partnerships are Important!

CCCIL provided guidance to local county health clinics about the need for providing accessible exam tables. CCCIL had been hearing from our consumers, especially female, that it had been years since they had received an annual exam because of lack of access.

CCCIL's board Chair at the time was working with the clinics and heard a lot about this issue. She took it back to her office and was able to secure funding to purchase accessible tables for all the county clinics. When you have a similar goal, \$ should not be the factor in whether that goal can be achieved. It takes "good will and knowing and believing in doing the right thing" for the betterment of our community!

Strengthening and Sustaining the Journey through Potholes and Rough Patches – CRIL

- CRIL's collaborations have not always been productive, but the personal relationships in those collaborations have been priceless.
- In some cases, there was not a win / win situation. But be careful on how you break away from the group. You never want to "burn your bridge."
- Funding can help a lot to get you through the potholes and rough patches. Collaborations for grant applications makes for a better opportunity to get funded. For some reason, "money" always seems to strengthen the relationship. *See example next slide.*

CRIL Example – Funding



When you make strong connections with people, you may be the first place they turn to because they know what you do and they know your character. CRIL was recently contacted by an organization that we had worked with over 16 years ago about a collaborative grant application from HUD Housing Authority, County of Alameda. There had not been a reason to work with each other for a very long time. It had been 3 years since we met with each other on a different project – employment services. The organization let CRIL know that they were developing a partnership with multiple organizations to write a HUD grant. The grant would fund 40 various Housing Authorities. When you have strong connections and focus on the benefits that each organization can bring, collaboration can work well. CRIL is waiting to hear if this collaboration will be beneficial.

Strengthening and Sustaining the Journey through Potholes and Rough Patches – CRIL, cont'd.

- You may have one person in the group that you've built a strong bond with. It is much easier to work with a group of people who are not on the same page as you when you have a "wingman" who could support you in making your point.
- Sustaining the journey is the long-term goal. For the journey to continue, there must be a win / win outcome. What does each group (person) get out of the partnership? Always keep that goal as the focus of the partnership.

Strengthening and Sustaining the Journey through Potholes and Rough Patches – CRIL, cont'd. 2

- What happens when the players change? Often times there is a drop in the partnership. Before the change, introduce new players to the group.
- What happens when the focus of the group changes? Ask yourself if this is the direction your Center would like to move. Remember: Don't burn your bridge.
- The Key to Sustainable Partnerships: The best thing that gets you through the potholes and rough patches: Quality Service with Successful Outcomes for the consumers.

Questions & Discussion

Preview of Upcoming Events

- Webinar: Creating a Welcoming and Supportive CIL for Diverse Populations
 - *Scheduled for September 25*
 - *Presenters: Kim Gibson, Lee Schulz, Stan Holbrook*
- Workshop: Disability, Diversity, and Intersectionality: An American Journey for CILS
 - Pre-Conference Workshop at APRIL
 - October 5, 2018 @ 9:00am–4:15 pm
- Webinar: Data Mining and Community Mapping to Support DDI
 - *TBD*

Final Questions and Evaluation Survey

Any final questions?

Directly following the webinar, you will see a short evaluation survey to complete on your screen. We appreciate your feedback!

https://usu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2nLLLbYOLnxT4uF

CIL-NET Attribution

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