



Community Activation Network: CAN
First Organizing Meeting
October 22, 2020 | 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM
Meeting Notes

Members of Community Activation Network (CAN) met for the second time via zoom on October 22, 2020. (The planned second meeting in September was canceled because the Grand Jury in the Breanna Taylor case had just announced its decision and many in our community were hurting.)

Here is the agenda for the meeting:

- Welcome and agenda overview
Taking Action: How can we support A Path Forward for Louisville?
Presentation by: Lyndon Pryor, Louisville Urban League
CAN-DID Breakouts
Next steps and adjournment

Introductions

50 members on Zoom by 9:05. Build Back Better, Together work team has joined CAN. Some folks in the Equity in Philanthropy project. Will discuss how to add new members at the end of the meeting.

Ann acknowledged the racial equity issues still swirling in the community, and asked participants to share how they are doing during this difficult time.

One member shared: Have always lived in a genocide. Hoping for a generation of Black people who not spend their whole lives inside a genocide.

Another shared: Inspiring that people continue to show up on calls and meetings like this to have tough conversations and plan actions, not just talk about issues.

Ann reviewed purpose of CAN, including flow of information, people, learning. People at a national conference were interested in this, so this may be a unique, learning laboratory (a term later critiqued as not accurate; will use "ecosystem" going forward). Connect with others, be vulnerable and candid in breakout groups.

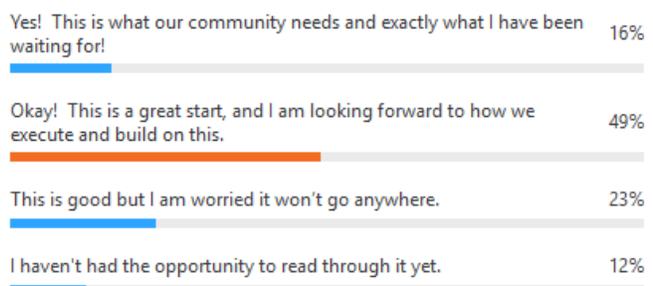
Also a space for learning. Lyndon Pryor will be explaining A Path Forward – be openminded and intentional. Acknowledged Sadiqa, Lyndon, and others who put APF together.

Taking Action:
How can we support A Path Forward?

Ann introduced Lyndon Pryor, Louisville Urban League to discuss A Path Forward.

Ed Cortas presented a only short survey to see what people know about A Path Forward, and how they reacted to it. The results appear at right.

1. When you first read through The Path Forward, what was your initial reaction?



Lyndon on the report:

Near when COVID hit and JCPS shut down, we were all figuring out how to work. League contacted Black nonprofit leaders to check in on how they were being affected, how to share resources. Breonna Taylor's case also came to light, and George Floyd made the news. So the discussion broadened quickly to encompass the emerging racial equity issues that were prominent everywhere.

What to do? Needed to do something significant to break through the cycle of protest and inaction. About 40 people representing 35 or so organizations presented priorities. Could have been a 200-page document, but the group sought to prioritize items that need immediate attention, and boiled the issues down to just over two dozen items.

Goal was to speak to those with influence – government, business, philanthropists – to urge solutions. Current power structures are not distributing resources equitably.

Now more than 60 organizations, nearly 100 individuals supporting *APF*, many on this call. Some movement seen:

- In small business development support (both local and national support) – actual funding, not just training.
- In housing, pushing to build 150 homes with a pathway to ownership by Black people by 2022. Important way to build wealth.
- Mental health group pulling together providers to help with urgent needs in the Black community, with real investment in Black and Black-serving providers.
- Investments in education on a smaller scale, looking for more investment there.
- In Breonna Taylor's case, continued push for involved officers to be fired, challenging how the Attorney General has approached the case.

Q&A addressed

- Whether all *APF* authors are part of CAN? No, but they are welcome to join
- How funds will be allocated? Still a work in process. At least \$4 million committed to specific areas so far.
- Leads for each of the main pathways. Have they been identified? Jobs: Johnetta Robinson (small business place); Education has three leaders; Justice a broad category, mostly people in the League; Health: Monica, two others; Housing: Jeana Dunlap and others.
- Criminal justice: Anything on race & gender? More concern with police reform at first – divest/invest strategy. Divest from over-policing, invest in community policing, how arrests are made, how bail works. Not fully fleshed out in other spaces.
- What did you expect to be accepted/rejected? Did that happen? Or the opposite? Lyndon has been in Louisville five years, and has a complicated reaction to the city. City seems closer to systematic transformation than other cities. We have what we need to do it right – human and financial resources, political will, intellectual firepower. But the city seems to lack the courage it needs to tip the scales in the direction it needs to go. Weak on follow-through. Still need to develop the backbone to get things done.
- Lyndon may be able to respond to questions not addressed during the Q&A session here.

## CAN-DID Breakouts

*Questions: What stands out in APF? How does the Path Forward challenge or inspire you as you consider your work throughout your career? What will you keep doing? What will you start doing? What will you stop doing?*

### REPORTING OUT

Six groups:

Garrison: What stood out was the report's boldness, thoroughness, and emotional energy (including hurt). Although few of its themes were surprising, we found it inclusive and dynamic – a call to get all hands on deck.

We had concern about how the “pie” will get re-cut. Do we have the courage? The report encourages us to do more – to call out inequities more often, to encourage leaders to be bolder, to stop participating in certain spaces where talk never leads to action. Leverage this energy and capture this moment, or it will be a real missed opportunity.

Ashley: *APF* clear, comprehensive, reflected community convictions. Having clarity about \$50 million fund piques interest, may result in funding. How do community efforts overlap – support, duplication?  
Tracy Davis: Being Black is “in” currently, as is DE&I. But funders aren't involved in the Black community, so writing checks with good intention but without a lot of information. Be mindful of unconscious bias. Equivalent of “mansplaining” without more clarity on how to invest where impact is highest.

Harrison : *APF* is long-term and systemic. Not apologetic. Big ideas, acknowledging how big the problems are. Role of multiple Black-led groups and funds, and how important they are. The more, the better. Compare established nonprofits with new grass-roots groups that haven't traditionally got funding.

Christen: *APF* inspired staff to connect systemic racism to their purpose and work. Stop not trusting white people, give them a chance to move forward. Stepping back and ceding power as an institution. Blurry lines between bystanders and perpetrators in a genocidal situation. How to create urgency like that for COVID; fortitude to keep focused attention until change happens. Avoid “laboratory” as a term.

Lynette: *APF* gives a lot of hope. Gives an access point for those who want to be involved, an anchor point for Black community. Don't stall out in the initiative-building phase. Need sustained interest and energy. Keep asking “What next?” Tia: Involve voices of whole community. Celebrate victories to keep hope alive.

Sarah: Structural work has to be done before the culture can change. Need collaboration between city and JCPS as “giants in the room.” Put dollar amounts to needs. Rex Funk: “Margins of the margins” – must focused on the most marginalized folks – not the most privileged within a marginalized group. Intersections of privilege can make this a challenge.

### Closing

Asked Lyndon for comments after hearing the reports out:

Making sure the community voice gets represented has always been a goal for the *APF* document. Keep expanding the table to include other voices. The Urban League wants everybody to win, even if they are producing overlapping statements/documents. Path is not in competition with anyone.

Equity has become a shiny new buzzword. It's a process, not a destination. Can't get to equality without talking about equity – which requires some folks to give up some power, authority, and resources.

Maybe even your seat. If you're not having that frank a discussion, you are not really talking about equity.

White people need to *earn* the benefit of the doubt that has historically been given without a lot of thought.

Ann: This felt real. Let's keep practicing in this space. Next meeting if November 19 (working around Thanksgiving).

Adding others: not ready to open doors wide, but current members can invite others and add them organically.

Keep showing up. We have a huge opportunity to develop this ecosystem.

