



### **2016 Stewardship Council Retreat Summary**

**Date:** November 11-13, 2016

**Location:** LEAP Now, Calistoga, CA

#### **In Attendance:**

- Darcy Ottey - Chair
- Grant Abert - Vice Chair
- Sobey Wing - Secretary
- Kruti Parekh - SC Member
- Ramon Parish - SC Member
- Ashanti Branch - SC Member
- Kruti Parekh - SC Member
- Amanda Ashley Canty - New SC Member
- Edith Kusnic - YPW Partner & Witness
- Gigi Coyle - Guardian, Facilitator
- Dane Zahorsky - Staff
- Marisa Taborga Byrne - YPW Partner & Witness
- Michelle Katz - Witness
- David Allen- Board Fundraising Consultant & Trainer
- Sam Bull - YPW Partner / Host
- Cassie Bull- YPW Partner - Host

#### **Narrative Summary:**

This retreat marked the third birthday of Youth Passageways and the first year as a 501(c)3 organization. It was held at the LEAP Now campus just outside of Calistoga. This year, Gigi Coyle, Darcy Ottey, and Ashanti Branch facilitated the retreat.

It was an enormous relief to gather in person so soon in the aftermath of the election. Simply to be in one another's presence again provided a deep nourishment, as individuals and as the decision-making body of YPW.

The majority of participants arrived Friday afternoon, with a few key Stewardship Council members arriving on Saturday. There were also members who needed to be elsewhere to show up for ongoing and emerging events including Standing Rock. Our opening ceremony included acknowledging the lands on which we gathered, a traditional meeting place for the Wappo peoples, and brief time on the land seeking blessings and offering prayers in our own ways. We began with lighting the fire, joining it with the water, and offering it to the center of our circle, and then broke for dinner.

After dinner, we held opening circle and each of us shared our thoughts and expectations for the proceeding time together. We then concluded the long travel day with Darcy providing an overall context for the weekend and offering a bit of homework for the evening in the form of reviewing the written materials, especially the report, plan, and working agreements.

After a check-in on Saturday morning, Dane, and others presented the first draft of the 2016 report & 2017 plan (draft soon to be shared with the wider network) as well as a new messaging framework/theory of change for YPW. Key themes that came up included: How we collectively respond to the election, our ability to expand our fundraising efforts to reach out for smaller gifts from more donors, how rite of passage and social justice are part of a more integrated focus of YPW, how we communicate what we do in a way that is concise and effective.

Saturday afternoon, a council was held with our prospective SC members & guests serving as witnesses. The dialogue focused on various questions that came up throughout the year and those that needed to be added after the report and plan, to see a full list, you can find it at the bottom of the report.

That evening, we had a water and fire ceremony, a chance to be with the full moon, connect with the power of the Maacama Creek [which flows through the grounds] to offer prayers, shed tears or anger, or let the rocks that were weighing us down fall away in order to become current and carry our thur line into the coming year.

Sunday morning we started with re-commitments. All SC members continued on for another year of service, save Fidel Rodriguez who transitioned into the role of advisor and were joined by Amanda Ashley Canty. Dane then revisited the 2017 budget, message framework, and the gathering/public education campaign proposals so we could have clear affirmations of direction and dedication to what we were raising money *for* before learning a bit more about how. We then switched gears and gave our attention to an outside fundraising consultant who talked about the different aspects of broadening our donor base. He offered some ideas on how to think about our mission and vision and some exercises in which we each member shared about their personal and professional relationships to money. The session was enriched by questions and comments making it all more relevant to YPW. We ended the “rich” time with an activity in which we took turns telling our 60 second story about what we believe in and why YPW is worthwhile to support financially and in all ways possible .

Sunday afternoon other roles were affirmed for the coming year. Dane Zahorsky will continue on as Director/Broom Pusher with the target of hiring an additional person to start in March or earlier. We then proceeded to teams in which Grant Abert stepped off the Leadership Circle and Governance Teams, and Darcy Ottey will stepped off the External Team. Additionally, Michelle Katz, Edith Kuznic, Kruti Parekh, Marissa Taborga-Byrne, and Amanda Canty stepped onto the External Team, which will be birthing the Public Education think tank that has been considered in the past but not implemented yet. Gigi Coyle will continue as a Guardian.

We closed with some silent reflection and gratitude time outside before going our separate ways.

**As Youth Passageways moves forward into the next year**, there is the hope to gather again in-person in conjunction a possible fundraiser in the Bay Area or LA in April.

***Thank You** to all Stewardship Council members, new and old!, & their families, Darcy Ottey, Gigi Coyle, Ashanti Branch, Marisa Taborga-Byrne, Michelle Katz, Edith Kusnic, David Allen, the Kailo Fund, Kalliopeia Foundation, Leap Now! And Sam & Cassie Bull, and many many others!*

#### **Initial Questions:**

- How to engage partners deeply?
- How are folks engaging we don't even know?
- How are we holding partner recognition systems?
- How are our Stewardship Council teams working?
- What's been happening in LA post gathering?
- How do hold social identity/positioning in our selection/recruitment process?
- How well have we been functioning as an SC and in our individual roles?
- Are we dedicated to having an elder and younger wisdom keeper?
- How are we living into hiring a Network Mapper by March?
- Colorado gathering in 2018?
- Do we have capacity for crowdfunding?
- How do contractors & YPW interact? What are the expectations in representing YPW to the wider world?
- How do we as an SC & partners represent YPW at gatherings we attend?
- Diversity representation priorities for SC?

#### **Added Questions/Ideas:**

- How do we want to respond to this moment and move with it?
- Who's missing?
- Political response & 501c3
- How we get inclusive in difference?
- The America that people are trying to save is the house that's on fire
- We're seeing a lifting of the veil - it's a right moment to get clear
- Where are the specifically religious practitioners [Christian, Muslim, Etc]

- When a seed germinates it roots before it sprouts
- Where is the yes from the working class white folks?
- How does language take root in educational institutions?
- Is there still a stone that doesn't want to move?
- The spirit of winter, conserving energy, hunkering down, not growing before ready
- We need arrows going backwards to meet people where they are - going to the past to get to the future
- Why are the people not here? Why is this not the cutting edge?
- Tie the mission statement to survival and tie it to youth
- The next gathering at Ferguson?
- Youth people that see a glimpse of the new world
- Strength, resilience, and endurance that youth need
- What would it take for the SC to feel like they did well and that the wintering is done?
- Seasons are cyclical
- IS ROP done in a colonized manner?
- Who are we inviting into the new house?
- How do we jump on the vital energy of these times?
- How do we make room for those we have 'othered'?
- Relevancy - ROP as subset
- Required fees? Gifting, attracting, magnetising abundance - abundance or just enough?
- What is truly needed