



NATIONAL
PARENT
LEADERSHIP
INSTITUTE

NPLI News

Fall Edition - 2019

Staying focused through civic engagement.

As political and cultural climates continue to shift in our country, it is important for us - all of us - to stay focused and not get distracted or overwhelmed by the continuous whirlwind of issues that are presented to us each day. Parent leadership as defined by Elaine Zimmerman is the capacity for parents to interact within society with purpose to achieve positive outcomes for children. The key here is interacting *with purpose*. Moving forward with purpose to achieve those positive outcomes for our children - each of us has a running list in our heads, in our hearts or on the refrigerator - **requires laser focus**.

NPLI continues to see this laser focused purpose delivered through the efforts and impact of parent leaders as they use their voice to inform public policy, stand up for their beliefs and values and implement community civic projects in over 55 communities. Parent Leaders are the linchpin to change in the United States and they intersect with issues at every level in our society. Civic engagement continues to be critical, but is not as complicated as some think. Exercising your right to vote on November 5th is an act of civic engagement. Attending a candidate forum – civic engagement. Contacting your legislator – civic engagement. Using your skills to help others in your community – civic

engagement. Starting a free library at the laundromat to encourage literacy for families (we share this story of Parent Leader Grace Muwina in this newsletter) is civic engagement. And why? Because civic engagement is part of the solution to implementing change. Keeping our eyes on the prize - concentrating on achieving our desired outcomes for children and communities – will be important as we aim to finish 2019 strong.

In this issue we share how we are doing our part to create change in our communities, challenge systems and support parent leaders nationwide one small act, one conversation and one conference at a time. We share where we've been and what other parent leaders are doing to create caring communities for children.

In community,

Donna Thompson-Bennett
NPLI Executive Director

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN ACTION

Election Day is November 5th

*Exercise your right to vote and cast
your ballot on November 5th.*

*Show off your "I just voted" pics on
Facebook and Instagram.*

Parent Leader Spotlight - Grace Muwina

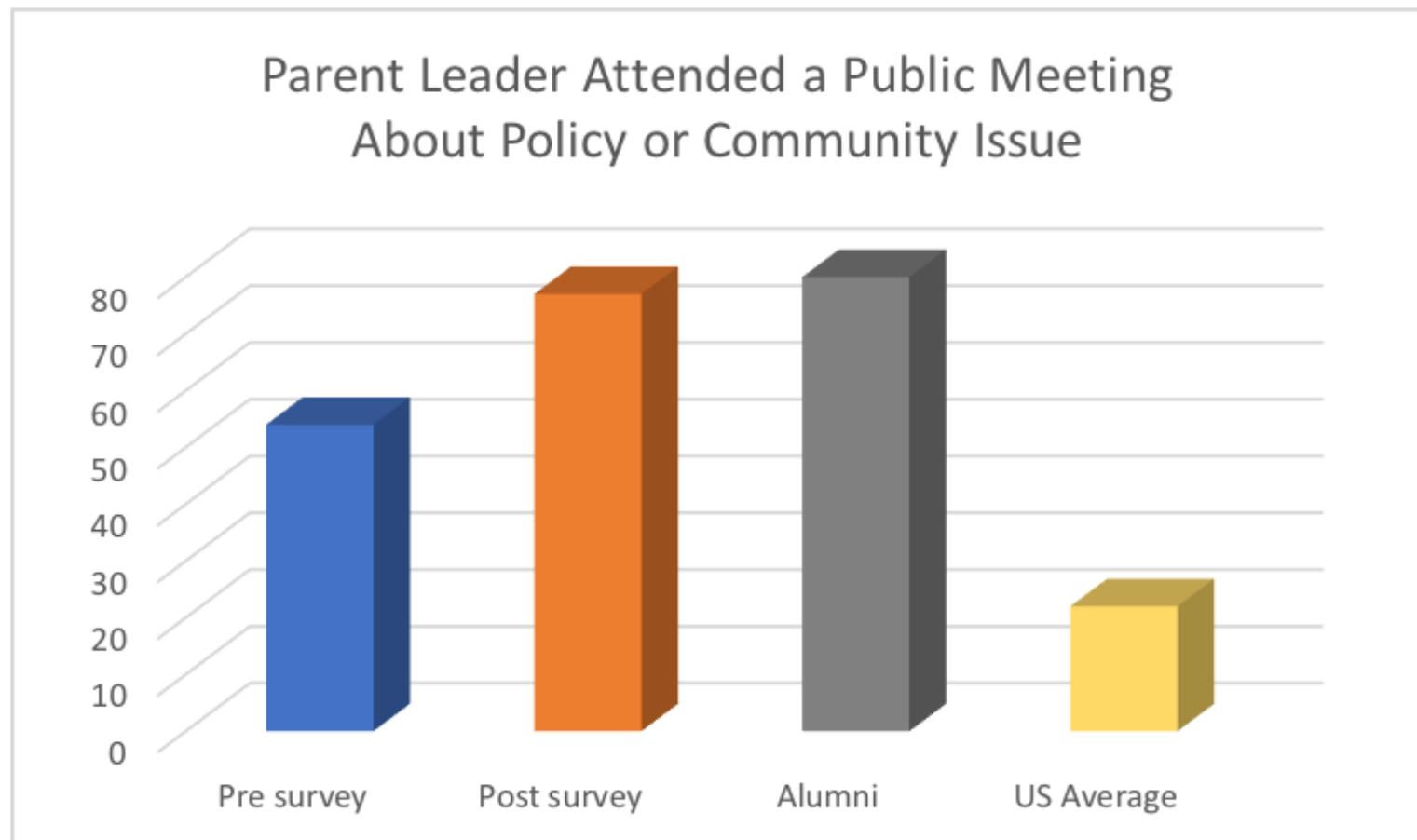
Chelsea PLTI Parent Leader Grace Muwina meets parents and children where they are through her innovative community project.

In collaboration with Chelsea Community Connections Coalition, Grace is putting compact, free children's libraries in laundromats throughout Chelsea, Massachusetts to promote literacy with young children, increase access to books and decrease their screen time. "I wanted this program to reach the kids where they are all the time, and give them access to books to read," said Grace. "It's also a way to cut down on screen time as well. When kids are in the laundromat, they are constantly looking at videos on the phone. If this can get them off the phone for a half hour and help them to read a book instead, that can make a big difference over time." The tactic to provide literacy materials at laundromats and other community locations families frequent is a movement moving across the United States. We want to congratulate Grace on the success of her community civic project and thank her for the impact she is making on families in her community.



Note: Each parent leader participating in the Parent Leadership Training Institute implements a community civic project and produces a project report as a requirement for graduation of the 20-week curriculum. The community project is based upon the student's personal passions that are directed toward creating change on behalf of children.

measuring impact



Evaluation findings* (2017-2019) showed that PLTI led to profound changes in parents' civic engagement and activism in their communities on behalf of children and families. Through data collection from our PLTI evaluation process, which

includes pre, post and alumni surveys, the percentage of parents who reported attending a public meeting about policy or a community issue more than doubled the US Average and tripled when parents reported upon graduating PLTI and as alumni one year after.

*Geller, J.D. and Perez, W.Y. (2019). Amplifying parent voice and transformation: National Parent Leadership Training Institute three-year evaluation report. New York, NY.: Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools, New York University.



Community Spotlight - Wind River, Wyoming

Wind River PLTI Facilitator Jason Baldes, of the Eastern Shoshone Tribe of Wind River located in Wyoming, was a delegate present at the historic event that took place near the entrance to Yellowstone National Park in Montana, where American Indian and First Nations of Canada tribes met to discuss and expand the number of signatories to the Buffalo Treaty – an historic agreement that formalizes intertribal collaboration to restore bison to tribal and appropriate non-tribal public lands.

The treaty signing expands a commitment that began in 2014 when 13 nations of American Indians and the First Nations of Canada wrote and signed the first cross-border indigenous Buffalo Treaty. The bison, also known as buffalo, is our continent's largest land mammal and plays a major role in the spiritual and cultural lives of numerous Native American tribes. Jason who is also the Executive Director of the Wind River Native Advocacy Center, has dedicated many years to restoring the Bison population and it heartens us to see the signing of the Buffalo Treaty and his role in making that happen.



Congratulations !

HUGE shout out to all the PLTI Cohorts that started this fall:
Delhi, CA; Los Baños, CA; Jacksonville, FL; Maui, HI; Oahu, HI; New Orleans, LA; Kansas City, MO; Springfield, MO; Moberly, MO; Jacksonville, FL; Columbus, OH; Rochester, NY; Providence, RI; Everett, WA;



Congratulations to the [Parent Leadership Training Institute KC](#) in Kansas City, MO on a successful Retreat. Welcome Parent Leaders!!



Jacksonville, Florida PLTI "Parents Who Lead" kicked off their second cohort in September sponsored by the Jacksonville Public Education Foundation.



New Orleans launches its sixth cohort, with the support of Mayor Cantrell's Office of Youth and Families/Healthy Start. The sixth cohort will have their retreat on November 2nd, and this new cohort will be supported by the region's dedicated alumni network, and a solid CDT. We are so excited to see NOLA hosting a new cohort!

Where We've Been

NPLI Board Members and NPLI Team Visit Chelsea and Revere PLTI Alumni

In early October, the NPLI team and Board had the wonderful privilege of spending time with PLTI Alumni from Revere and Chelsea, Massachusetts. On this first gathering of alum from these two communities, parent leaders discussed what comes next, including the additional skills and knowledge they need to continue their leadership journey. NPLI team members learned how parent leaders are taking their skills learned in PLTI to bring about new, positive change in their communities. There was a great time of fellowship, team building and sharing of goals for collective impact. Alumni are collaborating to build what comes next in their work across their PLTI communities.



Below: PLTI parent leaders from Connecticut and Rhode Island in Hartford, CT at the federal child care policy forum on September 12, 2019.



PLTI Alumni Participate in Federal Child Care Policy Roundtables Hosted by US Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

NPLI's Zulema Gomez - Sr. Implementation Specialist and Melvette Hill - Policy and Partnerships Consultant and twenty-three PLTI Parent leaders from California, Connecticut, and Rhode Island joined child care providers, philanthropic organizations, businesses and state, local and federal government officials at the *“Supporting Working Families: HHS Roundtables on Improving Access to High-Quality Child Care”* held in Hartford, CT (September 12th) and Sacramento, CA (October 29th) to engage in discussions on access and affordability to high-quality child care. The participants divided into stakeholder small groups and discussed the following:

- What do working families seek from child care to assure that they are able to work and their children are thriving? What is high-quality child care? (Parents)
- How do we make care safe, healthy, and developmentally supportive while preserving choice? As businesses, what barriers do providers face in that pursuit? (Providers)
- What are employers interested in doing to leverage child care to address the worker shortage? What is their experience with child care and employing parents? (Employers)
- What are states/localities doing to increase access to affordable quality child care? What can be done to streamline the process and prevent the child care cliff? (State/Local/Tribal Child Care Officials)

In Sacramento, Rosa Nuño, PLTI Parent Leader from Merced, CA, gave voice to parents that work in agricultural and industrial fields to ensure inclusion of proximity based child care in policy and programs, "These families often work 12-14 hour days and deserve to

be close to their children also." Pictured below, Hayward Mclain, PLTI Parent Leader from Danbury, CT was selected to close the day in Hartford with his remarks, a powerful message about the importance of listening to parents' voice. He shared that as presidential candidates debate the importance of health care policy, the climate and foreign affairs - they need to know and understand that high quality, affordable child care is just as important.

In addition to the child care policy forums, HHS Administration for Children and Families is seeking input from the public and interested stakeholders on strategies to improve access to high quality, affordable child care in the U.S. The public comment period closes on December 2, 2019. **Click [here](#) for more details.**



Danbury PLTI Alum Hayward Mclain, closing out the Region 1 ACF Child Care Forum.

Equity Symposium

NPLI Director of Quality, Patti Keckeisen and Policy and Partnerships Consultant, Melvette Hill co-presented at the **Equity Symposium** in East Hartford, CT. Their workshop, Through the Lens of Equity: Understanding Self as We Understand Others is a component of NPLI's ongoing racial equity work. The workshop was interactive and helped participants gain greater insight and understanding on how our identities and experiences form our views on self and others as well as introducing the Parent Leadership Training Institute as a vehicle for racial equity and healing. Other CT PLTI Facilitators, Site Coordinators and Alumni were there as part of the planning team, workshop presenters or as participants.



UPLAN Goes to Washington, DC

Parent Leaders of UPLAN-United Parent Leaders Action Network's Core Members, including Toyin Anderson, graduate of Greater Rochester Parent Leadership Training Institute convened in Washington, DC this fall to strengthen their partnerships, discuss policy issues that matter in their communities and bring voice to their Congressional representatives particularly around early learning and child care. Donna Thompson-Bennett, our NPLI Executive Director and UPLAN staff partner was honored to join Toyin, other UPLAN Core Members' Parent Leaders and staff partners of Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors, Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI), Family Leadership Network, Mama Be Brilliant, OLÉ New Mexico, One America, Parent Voices, Partnership for Community Action, PIQE-Parent Institute for Quality Education, Somali Parents Education Board, and Washington State Ambassadors Head Start and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP).



"It is always a wonderful learning experience to be able to bring parent power to D.C. UPLAN's convening afforded me this opportunity. I also visited on Capitol Hill to meet with our elected officials and their staffers. These opportunities allowed me to thank them for the work they do and encourage them to support bills that parents care about that will better lives for families and communities," shares Toyin Anderson.



NPLI Welcomes New Member to Board of Directors

NPLI welcomes Kwesi Rollins to the Board of Directors. A member of IEL's Senior Leadership Team, Kwesi Rollins guides IEL's portfolio of programs designed to develop and support leaders with a particular emphasis on Family and Community Engagement, Early Childhood Education and Community-based Leadership Development. Kwesi directs the District Leaders Network on Family and Community Engagement and Leaders for Today and Tomorrow, an initiative that designs and delivers professional learning and support opportunities for school and district leaders.

Kwesi has years of experience working with local communities and state agencies to improve cross-sector collaboration and service delivery systems supporting children, youth and families. Mr. Rollins provided technical assistance and training to a range of state and county agencies, school districts, local schools and community-based organizations in projects funded by the U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Justice Office

of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Working with young people is also a personal passion for Kwesi who has special expertise in resiliency and youth development. He has been recognized as the Big Brother of the Year in the District of Columbia and is an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the National Capitol Area. He holds an MSW degree from the University of Maryland at Baltimore School of Social Work where he was a Maternal and Child Health Leadership Training Fellow.



The NPLI team and Board pictured here in Boston, MA as they met to discuss the key learnings from the recent PLTI evaluation and case studies, alumni support, framing the national narrative around Parent Leadership, and so much more!

From left to right: Kwesi Rollins, Wendy Haller, Alan Kerzin, Jennifer Ghidiu, Patti Keckeisen, Elaine Zimmerman, Donna Thompson-Bennett, Carolyn Lee-Davis, Melvette Hill, Olga Brown, Zulema Gomez, Nadine Lund. (Missing: Sandra Gutierrez)

skills, knowledge, and opportunity to have presence and power in the school, the neighborhood, the community, and at all public-policy decision-making tables.

www.ParentsWhoLead.org



Copyright © 2019 National Parent Leadership Institute, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can **subscribe** by going to [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

