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Lawrence Roybal

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APR 15 2010

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**ENVISIONING LEADERSHIP FOR A NEW MILLENNIUM:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE EXPERIENCES AND
PERSPECTIVES OF EMERGING ORGANIZATIONAL
AND COMMUNITY LEADERS**

BY

LAWRENCE A. ROYBAL

Bachelor of Arts, Communication,
University of New Mexico, 1984
Master of Public Administration,
University of New Mexico, 1990

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy
Organizational Learning and Instructional Technology**

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

May, 2010

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DEDICATION

To my loving family, loyal friends, and inspiring mentors who uplift me always.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the behaviors, experiences, perspectives, and values of emerging millennial leaders. The research explored how these emerging leaders defined and enacted their leadership styles, how they had been influenced by their life experiences and the actions of others, how they had been affected by various learning opportunities, and how their participation in a collegiate leadership development program had fostered their leadership. The research was comprised of six case studies of emerging organizational and community leaders. Interviews, journals, leadership creeds, and a focus group were used to collect the data. Twelve themes emerged from an analysis of the data: embracing differences, cultivating relationships, fostering collaboration, overcoming adversity, pursuing dreams, becoming pillars of inspiration, acquiring knowledge, engaging in reflection, striving for growth, pursuing civic engagement, building capacity, and envisioning millennial contributions. These emerging millennial leaders demonstrated ambidexterity, creativity, inclusivity,

interactions with state-of-the art technology, teamwork, and a commitment to social justice. The participants had clear views about the interactive effects of leadership and learning. Implications for community and organizational leadership, learning, and development are that collaborative and shared approaches may prove to be the most effective. This research addresses a gap in the literature on leadership, which mostly has focused on established leaders from preceding generations rather than upon emerging leaders from the millennial generation.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Preface

We constantly learn and change as members of organizations and communities. Leaders can expect to encounter challenges and uncertainties in these complex environments. Leaders should realize the significance of overcoming barriers that can hinder development as well as the capacity to fulfill aspirations. It is important to judge possibilities through the lenses of others to promote continued growth as leaders and the advancement of organizations and communities. Senge (1999) highlighted the need to deal with pressing issues with respect for varying perspectives to foster understanding, cooperation, and commitment to achieving a shared vision.

Emerging leaders define and enact leadership styles that may differ from the traditional leadership styles that have sometimes flourished or often floundered in various organizational and community settings. This study focused on the emergence of a new generation of leaders, particularly on the emergence of millennial leaders and the life experiences and learning opportunities that have transformed them and affected their leadership styles.

Change is inevitable. Some people fear it, while others embrace it. Leaders must confront it and harness its potential. Exceptional leaders embrace the power of transformation strategically to realize a vision of what their organizations and their communities could become. Life experiences, values, and views of the world shape views of leadership. Leaders must anticipate obstacles and persevere to realize dreams. These transformative experiences affect perceptions of self and purpose. Leaders must

make sacrifices, while cultivating engagement and cooperation. Collaboration and knowledge can strengthen the courage to deal with critical issues, drawing on them to overcome apathy, complacency, and pessimism.

Change sometimes allows for a positive leadership environment to emerge and flourish, drawing on collaboration and community partnerships to foster greater results. Given the increasing diversity within contemporary society, producing a harmonious environment within organizations requires greater understanding of diverse perspectives that embrace other ways to promote equity and fairness. In striving to establish organizational leadership and achievement, emerging leaders can look to the transformational leaders of the past for inspiration.

Leadership and learning are intertwined, often in subtle ways. People constantly learn and change. Leaders must expect to live with uncertainties and challenges in a transformative environment. Despite anticipating apprehension when facing problems, leaders can embrace learning as a bridge between uncertainty and greater awareness, understanding, and confidence. The development of leaders rests upon their attitudes and beliefs, as well as the lessons that experience provides. Transformative learning offers one window into emerging leadership.

Effective leadership is instrumental in all organizations. However, expectations of leadership shift as society changes. This requires significant innovation in leadership approaches to maintain organizational effectiveness. Leadership approaches that may have worked in the past soon drift out of step with a rapidly changing society (Stringer, 1996; White, Nair, & Ascroft, 1994).

This dissertation focused on how six emerging leaders learned from their experiences and how they defined and enacted their leadership styles. Their learning opportunities and their experiences included both their successes and their failures. A major focus of this study was the key learning experiences of the participants based on their exposure to a collegiate leadership development program. Participants were selected as volunteers for this research study because they successfully completed a collegiate leadership development program that involved emerging organizational and community leaders. This research study was designed to examine the experiences and perspectives of a purposive sample of millennials with regard to emergent community and organizational leadership. This study sought to assess the subsequent development of their approach to leadership.

Statement of the Problem

The current research literature on leadership focuses primarily on established leaders, not emerging leaders. Emergent leadership with a focus on younger generations therefore represents an untapped area for research. Specifically, emerging millennial leaders may have beliefs and approaches toward leadership that differ from those of established leaders. These differences may collectively lead to a shift in the dominant paradigm about organizational and community leadership.

Despite the wealth of information in the literature on the importance of effective leadership to organizations, communities, and stakeholders, minimal research has been generated regarding the experiences of emerging millennial leaders that led them to become effective leaders. Therefore, more research is needed in several areas:

- to delineate the characteristics, ideas, values, and practices of these emerging millennial leaders;
- to highlight their experiences and how they might be influenced by others;
- to determine who influenced their increasing effectiveness as leaders;
- to review the learning opportunities that affect them as leaders; and,
- to consider the effects of collegiate leadership development programs on the leadership of emerging leaders.

Purpose of the Study

This qualitative study explored how millennials defined and enacted their leadership styles and how they learned from their experiences as emerging community and organizational leaders. This study explored the characteristics, behaviors, and qualities that are emulated by emerging leaders, as well as the ideas, practices, and values that influenced them. The research also examined how participants were affected by their learning and the insights facilitated through participation in community service activities.

This phenomenological study explored the experiences of emerging organizational leaders in various settings, as well as the learning experiences that influenced the development of their respective leadership styles. The research explored how selected emerging leaders developed leadership skills. In particular, it examined how they learned from successes and failures to become more effective as organizational and community leaders. This study also described the role of a collegiate leadership development program in helping emerging leaders to develop their approaches to leadership.

More research is being devoted to the impact of higher education service learning programs on students, the institutions and organizations that they represent, and the communities that they support. The establishment of a growing number of collegiate leadership development programs that emphasize community service is promising, yet limited research has been conducted that explores the effect of such leadership development programs on the current generation of students. One purpose of this study was to explore the effects of a higher educational leadership development program upon emerging millennial leaders. The project was designed in part to explore and explain student experiences that involved community service initiatives. This research study involved six student fellows who completed a collegiate leadership development program associated with a nonprofit organization based in Washington, DC, and one of several major research universities across the United States of America.

Research Questions

The study explored how emerging organizational and community leaders develop and exercise effective leadership, and in particular, how they learn from successes and failures to become even more effective organizational and community leaders.

The primary research question was:

- *How do emerging leaders from a variety of organizations and community groups define and enact their leadership styles?*

The secondary research questions were:

- *How do various life experiences and the actions of others influence emerging organizational and community leaders?*

- *How do various learning opportunities affect emerging organizational and community leaders?*
- *How is emergent organizational and community leadership fostered through a collegiate leadership development program?*

Assumptions

The researcher assumed that emerging leaders who had completed a collegiate leadership development program would place a premium on the importance of shared leadership. Shared leadership has implications for leaders and all other members of organizations. This approach implies a duty to assume an active role in contributing to activities and projects as part of cohesive teams. Leaders dedicated to serving others are effective at building positive relationships and establishing alliances. In doing so, participants navigate complex environments and should respect the culture of the organization. This study is also predicated upon the theory of transformational learning. The assumption therefore was that successful emerging leaders would embrace continuous learning that builds personal and organizational capacity.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The conceptual framework for this study arose from the theories of transformational leadership, transformational learning, organizational learning, and community building. This study sought to identify key characteristics and practices of emerging leaders that might contribute to the domain of leadership. It examined the experiences and learning of this cohort of millennials. The influence of a collegiate leadership development program on emerging leaders was also an important focus.

Key Terms, Research Methods, and Means of Analysis

Case-study research focuses on specific instances or cases that are explored in depth, usually for an extended period of time.

Community development relies on engagement and cooperation, and it embraces the value of developmental leadership because of the nurturing essence of collaborative environments (Belenky et al., 1997).

Construct validity concerns how accurately certain phenomena of interest are gauged or measured. One way to boost construct validity is to use multiple measures (Yin, 1993, p. 39).

Content analysis stresses how meaning is conveyed (Merriam, 2001).

Cross-case analysis begins after individual case analyses have been completed. It involves identifying issues and themes that run through multiple cases in an attempt to build hypotheses and form generalized conclusions (Yin, 1994).

External validity concerns the reproducibility or applicability of research findings from one study to other cases, situations, or studies. In other words, are the findings generally true? (Merriam, 2001, p. 207).

Focus groups, a form of exploratory research, are structured discussions led by a moderator who follows a predetermined format. In these discussions, participants give open-ended responses to questions scripted in advance. The moderator asks follow-up questions, as needed, to clarify or to get participants to elaborate upon their responses, particularly if unanticipated themes emerge from participants' responses to open-ended questions.

Inductive reasoning goes from particular instances or occurrences (such as cases) to generalizations; its opposite is deductive reasoning, in which the conclusion necessarily follows from the premises.

Internal validity concerns whether research findings are accurate measures of reality. Interpretive research is based on an examination of lived experience through inductive reasoning.

Millennials are also known as the millennial generation, generation next, the Net generation, or generation Y. This generation was born c. 1980–1999 according to many definitions, although some research places the start date sooner and end date later. Millennials were born after members of generation X (who were born c. 1965–1979), who followed the baby boomers (born c. 1946–1964). A key trait of the age cohort of millennials is comfort and familiarity with electronic communications (cell phones, instant messaging, text messaging, the Internet, and social networking Web sites).

Organizational development can bring about organizational change and transformation through strategic structuring (Bell, French, & Zawacki, 2000).

Organizational learning occurs when a paradigm shift becomes deeply embedded in the ideas, values, and practices of an organization so that the conceptual learning is congruent with routine operations and procedures of the organization (Argyris & Schon, 1996).

Phenomenological research seeks to delineate the structure of phenomena (Creswell, 1994, p. 157; Merriam, 2001, p. 158). Purposive sampling, unlike random sampling, deliberately seeks out certain types of individuals, to the exclusion of others. In other words, prospective participants are included only if they match explicit criteria.

For the purpose of this study, participants were selected because they were emerging leaders involved in a variety of organizations and community groups.

Reliability means consistency in the sense that if the same questions were asked in the same way in a similarly designed research study, then they would yield the same answers or results.

Team building involves developing meaningful relationships and fostering connectivity and collaboration around a shared goal or mission (Stanfield, 2000).

Transformational leadership occurs when leaders, often through passionate conviction, can bring about constructive change, not only in organizational practices, but also in the organization's vision, mission, or goals.

Transformative learning occurs when new knowledge leads to a paradigm shift that is translated into significant behavioral or operational change in habitual ways of doing things because these practices are now seen in a new perspective (Mezirow, 2000).

Triangulation is the process of using many different, independent sources of information or data or forms of measurement or data collection to strengthen confidence in the findings that emerge from research and the conclusions drawn from the research.

Limitations of the Study

This qualitative study incorporated limited sampling through case-study research of six emerging leaders. Therefore, its findings are neither necessarily representative nor projectable. Involving emerging leaders through purposive sampling from a variety of educational, business, and community organizations may have mitigated this limitation.

The researcher administered a college leadership development program that all the participants completed. Because organizational practitioners serving as researchers have

a stake in supporting the advancement of such a study, it is important to acknowledge “the value-laden nature” of research in general (Creswell, 1994). It was important to minimize any researcher bias that might skew participant responses. To reduce researcher bias due to being in a position of authority in the program, an independent facilitator designed and conducted the focus group session, which also involved an outside observer. Additionally, 10 peer reviewers assessed the soundness of the study.

Triangulation of the interview data was accomplished by incorporating leadership journals submitted by each participant, which documented key leadership observations by the participants. An artifact in the form of a leadership creed was also included to increase the internal validity of the study. An additional point of triangulation was a focus group, which involved all of the participants to further strengthen the study by utilizing an outside facilitator and observer to address potential researcher bias.

A further delimitation of the study was that all of the prospective participants who agreed to participate happened to be female, although this was not part of the study design. Any possible gender differences between men and women in leadership styles and experiences were beyond the scope of this study. Additionally, the male researcher interpreted the experiences and reflections of the female participants, thereby possibly introducing unintended gender bias through filtering and distorting. All the participants in the study completed the same collegiate leadership development program together at the same time.

All of these factors are further potential sources of bias, hence limitations in this study. Despite these limitations, this study holds promise for increasing understanding of leadership and learning.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it provides additional knowledge that could aid in formulating new theories about organizational and community leadership as conceived and enacted by emerging leaders. Researching emerging leaders could uncover ways to enhance organizational effectiveness and community development as a new generation of leaders emerges.

This study is significant because additional research that furthers the understanding of effective practices of emerging leaders in educational, business, and community organizations is valuable. The current body of research literature has focused upon established, seasoned leaders, not the younger generation of emerging leaders. These emerging leaders had been assimilated and socialized in ways that differ from the traditional hierarchical approach to organizational and community leadership, and their leadership styles vary from conventional approaches.

This study is also significant because a better understanding of the connections between leadership development programs and community partnerships could lead to greater civic engagement by a new generation of leaders. In addition, this study is significant because additional knowledge and theories that advance the understanding of organizational and community leadership are valuable in a society struggling with governance in the 21st century.

Conclusion

This study of emerging leaders who had participated in a collegiate leadership development program was built on the expectation that leaders can encourage others to put aside self-interest to benefit others. It sought to assess how they envisioned and

enacted their leadership styles. It identified what life experiences and learning opportunities influenced them. It also sought to assess how their participation in a collegiate leadership development program had influenced their leadership.

Chapter II provides a review of the literature on transformational leadership, transformational learning, organizational learning, and community building. It also reviews literature regarding various generations, including millennials, because all the participants in the collegiate leadership development program were representatives of the millennial generation or generation Y.

Chapter III provides a summary of the study methodology, including sampling, design of the study, and data analysis.

Chapter IV provides an overview of the participants and presents the findings of the study, drawn from interviews and a focus group with participants, as well as excerpts from their leadership journals and leadership creeds. The discussion of the findings centers on the 12 themes that emerged from the data.

Chapter V summarizes the participants and the findings, delineates the implications of the study, and presents recommendations and possible areas for future research, including the role of gender in leadership and the influence of generational cohorts, specifically how this set of millennials defined and enacted their leadership styles as representatives of various educational, business, and community organizations.



“When we look at the ordinary and see the extraordinary, we ignite our passion.”

DEWITT JONES

Chapter II: Literature Review

Preface

The purpose of this study was to conduct qualitative research on emerging leaders from various organizations and community groups and how they enact and define their leadership styles. Transformational leadership, transformational learning, organizational learning, and community building are the foundational theories that are discussed in this review of the literature. Subsidiary topics include communication, empowerment, knowledge management, organizational development, strategic planning, technology, and differences between generations in contemporary organizations and communities. Leadership was central to this study, as each of the participants had a strong sense of mission and valued visionary leadership that would improve organizations and society.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leaders are social pioneers, characterized by Stanfield (2000) as having a genuine, passionate concern for others in learning and leadership. These social pioneers are the change agents in history. These leaders are sensitive to society's needs and brave enough to sacrifice for the whole. As learners and leaders who encourage change, such transformational leaders sometimes feel lonely, apprehensive, and vulnerable. Such leaders often embrace the model of developmental leadership because of the nurturing essence of collaboration in the learning environment (Belenky, Bond, & Weinstock, 1997).

Transformational leadership is dependent on connections and understanding. Courage, vision, and responsibility are important in fostering stewardship and team building. Leaders need strength to be responsible for helping organizations and

communities to realize a shared vision and to create opportunities to achieve their greatest potential. This realization hinges on fostering inclusiveness and dedication to democratic values that promote human growth (Brookfield, 1987; Engel, 2000; Gilligan, 1982; Goodlad, 2001). The ability to practice empathy and gain greater understanding while encountering differences should facilitate realizing the value inherent in a variety of opinions and lifestyles that are evident in diverse groups. Leaders encourage others to put aside their own interests for the benefit of the group (Bass & Avolio, 1994). In this process, they encourage the development of self and others.

Self-Reflection and Empowerment

Self-reflection on personal life experiences provides a starting point for exploring transformational leadership. Life is permeated with turbulence and triumphs, yet leaders must not allow failure to paralyze them (Maxwell, 2000). Instead, leaders must learn from their experiences to develop their own unique stances to leadership through self-care, while extending care for others as concerned members of a community. A stronger awareness of self strengthens leaders so that they can contribute more fully to community building in partnership with others as they guide change (Kotter & Cohen, 2002; Tichy & Devanna, 1990).

Transformational leadership can occur in the most ordinary places. Sergiovanni (2000) proposed that ordinary people in ordinary positions could make great contributions to society. These servant leaders do not consider themselves to have power over others, but instead empower those they work with to support their communities. Courageous people have shaped lives through their actions, a cornerstone of their leadership.

Servant leadership involves the idea that anyone in any situation can undertake the valiant role of contributing to community building (Greenleaf, 1977). These otherwise ordinary individuals are driven by passion and are grounded by their ability to constantly reflect and learn through their roles in organizations and communities (Greenleaf, 1977; Terry, 1993). Through shared experiences, leaders can form the foundation for personal and collective action that allows people to serve society more passionately and diligently. Such leaders are admired because of their values and their competence, but above all, people identify with them because they are real. Authenticity forges this strong connection between them. Transformational leaders exemplify charisma and sincerity, which also draws people to them.

Seibert, Silver, and Randolph (2004) discovered that organizational structures are focused almost exclusively on individual empowerment and have not considered factors associated with systems or communities. It is critical that organizations and communities provide members with the authority that they need to make competent decisions in a positive and supportive environment. Both personal and group empowerment are essential if communities hope to develop structures that fully integrate the abilities of individuals and harness collective enthusiasm that leads to action (Fetterman, 2004; Kotter & Cohen, 2002). The research of Seibert et al. (2004) was profound because it provided insight into the individual and contextual dimensions of empowerment.

Leaders' involvement in community-based education and research provides an opportunity for them to engage with others to develop important ideas and directions. Boverie and Kroth (2001) highlighted the ability to infuse commitment to shared goals through continuous learning to promote understanding, connections, and passion in the

workplace. Leaders can also impart commitment through long-term organizational and community connections for learning and service opportunities, thereby exercising their leadership in a way that empowers others.

Building Trust and Teamwork

Terry (1993) argued that transformational leadership entails risk and that leaders should be courageous in supporting virtuous results. Effective leaders succeed because others view them as capable and trustworthy. These leaders exude wisdom through their thoughtfulness and consistency. Evans (2000) claimed that transformation is based on trust and integrity, which are required to facilitate collective leadership. Through working with others, leaders can offer tremendous promise in the quest to realize collective aspirations. Exploring various perspectives on transformative leadership can make it clear that change is complex. Establishing strong community partnerships requires leaders to honor key principles.

Transformational leaders uphold flexibility, respect, and trust. These principles allow for cooperation, as they are built around active dialogue and positive relationships inspired by mutual respect and goals. Sincerity provides a strong connection with others in learning and leadership, built on humility, sincerity, and grace. Leadership serves as a venue for advancing exemplary character so that the leader may contribute as part of a democratic citizenry committed to advancing human rights and social justice. Leaders need to change themselves to be effective in producing a more harmonious environment, one conducive to diverse perspectives that embrace equity and fairness.

Leaders need to foster teamwork, which requires soliciting alternative points of view. Leaders who challenge the status quo can provide an important voice that should

be heard. Considering alternative perspectives can enhance organizations and communities. Sharing ideas about the organization's future effectively requires positive leadership that can help to visualize the ideal, sustain emotional intelligence, and pursue the discovery of emotional reality (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). The most skillful transformational leaders do more than simply value the insights of others, but actually empower them to pursue their own goals.

The next section of the literature review will focus on the literature in regard to transformational learning and how it supports leaders in their teams, organizations, and ultimately, their communities. Transformational learning is tied with many related themes, including empowerment and community building.

Transformational Learning

Leaders who value the essential principles of transformational learning can change the arena to serve their communities. The principles of transformational leadership represent the hope needed for leaders to engage others in positive change. These principles also illustrate the need for continuous learning, organizational development, and shared vision.

Lewin (1997) presented a perspective for transformation via the *equilibrium point*, which results from a continuum of forces. Mezirow (2000) offered a related notion through the *disorienting dilemma* (p. 124), which he claimed was necessary to bring about personal transformation. Significant personal and organizational transformation arises from a collective shift of mind that can occur when people perceive the world through different lenses, realizing the need for change and renewed direction. This

approach relies upon curiosity and an ongoing quest to find out how systems and organizations could be improved.

Inquiry and Discovery

Inquiry can guide people to a better sense of direction as learners and leaders (Cranton, 1994). Transformational learning requires developing the skills needed for inquiry. Inquiry develops better logic and can be applied in everyday decisions, while advancing views of transformation and leadership. A leadership perspective must incorporate constant exposure to new information and must accommodate the impact of this on a person's perspectives (Cranton, 1994; Waterman, 1997). These learning experiences affect the perceptions of leaders. Inquiry and discovery help leaders to remain open to multiple interpretations and help them to consider different ways to approach or respond to issues.

Transformational learning requires developing the skills needed for inquiry. Through inquiry, people can find a better sense of direction as learners and leaders (Cranton, 1994). Inquiry develops better logic and can be applied in everyday decisions, while advancing views of transformation and leadership. A leadership perspective must incorporate constant exposure to new information and the effect of this on a person's perspectives (Cranton, 1994; Waterman, 1997). These learning experiences affect the perceptions of leaders. Inquiry and discovery help keep leaders open to multiple interpretations and help them to consider different ways to deal with issues.

Reflection with others in nurturing environments offers promise in the attempt to develop meaningful relationships and fosters connectivity and collaboration (Boverie & Kroth, 2001; Senge, 1999; Stanfield, 2000). Understanding transformational learning

theory is valuable. This is true, especially in the pursuit to value opportunities arising through the continuous discovery of possibilities illuminated through the consideration of various perspectives (Boverie & Kroth; Mezirow, 2000). The considerations of multiple perspectives is an essential component of how groups can function effectively.

Connectivity and Group Dynamics

Bringing people together from different perspectives to build stronger teams is facilitated through shared learning (Fullan, 2001). Siebert, Silver, and Randolph (2004) emphasized the importance of attending to individual needs, as well as group dynamics and social considerations. They viewed empowering structures and practices as contextual variables that affect individual feelings about empowerment. Duck (2001) proposed that leaders could create a culture for change by sensitizing people to the pressures of change. A culture of change foregrounds the discrepancy between current conditions and more desirable ones. A culture of change is one in which the leader can communicate positive, realistic expectations related to the advantages of the transformation. However, facilitating change requires digging out the embedded assumptions of individuals, groups, and communities, in which may lodge resistance to change.

Transformational learning occurs when people become critically aware of their own tacit assumptions and expectations, as well as those of others, while assessing the relevance of these assumptions and expectations for making an interpretation (Mezirow, 2000). Such learning requires collaboration and improved communication to foster constructive change, while considering various preferences and managing conflicting

political pressures. These pressures must be addressed so that working relationships can be established and maintained.

Throughout their lives, individuals connect with other individuals from different backgrounds in a variety of settings and learn from them and from their experiences. People often share their experiences through stories because of the need for understanding and the effectiveness of stories for conveying personal truths (Gardner, 1995; Senge, 1999; Wheatley, 2002). People engage in a process of self-discovery by reflecting on personal experiences and listening to others. In this process, they learn to understand themselves and others better, which contributes to personal growth. Through sharing hardships and aspirations, people can become more empathetic learners and more compassionate leaders. Such interpersonal interactions could inspire leaders to serve organizations and communities in partnership with others more wholeheartedly (Boverie & Kroth, 2001).

Transformational change is inherently dependent upon interconnectivity and relationships with others in a variety of settings (Daloz, 1999; Senge, 2000). Collaboration, trust, communication, compassion, strategic direction, and passion are essential to bring people together for shared learning opportunities. These principles are essential to interpersonal connectivity and can yield positive change through greater attention to learning through organizational and community systems (Daloz, 1999; Morgan, 1998). Such learning dovetails with awareness of individual and collective processes.

Transformational learning is achieved by individuals who work as a team and are inspired by collective energy and talents. Whenever people fail to notice the

transformation that they encounter, they fail to appreciate learning and change. They must realize even the subtle lessons with which they are faced every day. Recognizing these lessons and embracing them facilitate their continued development and growth. Such experiences give people the opportunity to expand their abilities by integrating knowledge and experience as leaders so that they may support others. This generates meaning through the questions that leaders encounter through their interactions and the ensuing transitions that result because of their reflection (Daloz, 1999). Reflection highlights the nurturing essence of collaboration in the learning environment (Belenky et al., 1997; Mezirow, 2000).

The organizational learning literature will be reviewed in the next section of this chapter. The review will include how organizations learn through dialogue, teamwork, building trust, developing knowledge, strategic development, new technology, gaining access, and managing change.

Organizational Learning

Organizational learning is upheld by flexibility, respect, and trust; these principles allow for cooperation, as they are built around active dialogue and positive relationships inspired by mutual respect and collective goals. Collective learning serves as a means for advancing exemplary character so that one may contribute ethically and morally as part of a democratic citizenry committed to advancing human rights and social justice (Brookfield & Preskill, 1999; Freire, 1996). Senge (2000) emphasized the importance of developing a mindset that incorporates continuous learning and change.

Various principles promote positive organizational dynamics and community linkages. Communication, compassion, collaboration, and trust are essential to bring

people together for shared learning opportunities. These principles are also prominent in organizational transformation and community-building initiatives that can yield positive change by focusing on organizational climate and culture (Morgan, 1998; Senge, 1999). Transformation is possible when people unite to change momentum and direction. Such constructive transformation is realized through the passion of individuals who work as a team, inspired by the positive synergy that is possible in healthy organizations and communities (Sergiovanni, 2000; Stanfield, 2000). This synergy is facilitated by personal authenticity, which strengthens trust.

Authenticity and Shared Vision

Organizational learning offers promise in a quest to realize a sense of purpose and vision (Boverie & Kroth, 2001; Crossan & Vera, 2004). Exploring various perspectives on group interaction and team building makes it clear that positive change can be elusive and that fostering strong networks is a key to realizing constructive organizational and community transformation. Leadership is sometimes suppressed by the bureaucratic structure and dominant culture of organizations. Addressing this issue requires authentic leaders who act strategically and persistently.

An exploration of organizational learning and group interaction is valuable for leaders to understand opportunities to develop a shared vision. Organizational learning is possible in organizations and communities when people unite to change momentum and direction. Such constructive transformation occurs through the passion of individuals who work in teams, inspired by the positive synergy that is possible through cohesive groups (Sergiovanni, 2000; Stanfield, 2000). Shared experiences and integrated knowledge afford the opportunity to expand potential through teams.

Awareness of self and others through dialogue is central to group development because of the importance of personal understanding to facilitate organizational learning and team building. A foundation of knowledge built through an awareness of self is advanced by the support of those with whom leaders interact in organizations and communities (Kotter & Cohen, 2002; Mezirow, 2000). Self-awareness is essential because such an understanding allows people to engage more fully in community building (Senge, 1999; Stanfield, 2000). A stronger connection with others strengthens the personal capability to contribute more fully to the collaborative process that is necessary in leadership (Kotter & Cohen, 2002; Tichy & Devanna, 1990). Connections with others are imperative for groups to function and learn together.

Group learning must be applied systematically for organizations and communities to reach their full potential (Allen & Cherrey, 2000; Daloz, 1999). Systems theory relates to organizations and communities and the many distinct components that comprise these systems. Connectivity and constant group interaction are especially evident in these complex environments (Allen & Cherrey). A systematic approach to group learning is essential for strategic planning.

Strategic Planning and Team Building

A strategic planning process is one way to bring people together to share in developing an approach to organizational development and community building. The endeavor of organizational development and community building can be contentious, but it can bring about organizational change through collaboration and strategic structuring (Bell, French, & Zawacki, 2000; Morgan, 1998). Strategic planning requires people with varying perspectives to share their ideas for the organization's future. Kotter and Cohen

(2002) claimed that this process should be deliberative and incremental, facilitating the flow of information, empowering individuals to overcome barriers, developing reward systems, and garnering the support of leaders to move the organization forward.

Changing the culture of an organization may be necessary for all of this to occur.

Leaders need to be vigilant about efficiency, ensure that tasks contribute to the organization's purpose, and avoid the divisiveness that occurs when employees compete for advancement based on their efforts to increase functional responsibilities disproportionately. Strategic planning efforts emphasize the need for increased efficiency and productivity, particularly with budgeting and finance. Strategies to enhance productivity include a shared vision and a commitment to empowering employees. Cooperation between administrators is vital to build the trust needed to realize success (Paulsen & Smart, 2001). Senge (1999) realized the importance of brokering resources and getting teams to function to achieve organizational goals.

Organizational development requires teamwork and improved communication to evaluate changes that relate to spending and outcomes, while managing changing preferences and conflicting political pressures. Bringing people together from different perspectives to develop plans for a better organization, such as those inspired by common goals, calls for shared leadership (Fullan, 2001).

Group members in training programs may develop political rivalries and form opposing constituencies. However, these factions must learn to work together to achieve organizational goals and objectives. Many organizations have not engaged all of their stakeholders and constituencies, so significant work is needed to generate a more inclusive environment in which an organization can flourish.

With strengthened partnerships, organizations can achieve greater results. These connections embrace change within individuals, organizations, and whole communities so that leaders can establish harmonious environments that are more accommodating to diverse perspectives and that value participation by a wider collection of voices (Gilligan, 1982). The process of change and transformation is often fractious, so in times of transition, the strength of partnerships is often tested.

Partnerships and Constructive Change

Leaders are expected to monitor their values and the meaning of their actions continuously. Partnerships are needed to leverage resources, develop cohesive teams, and promote positive group dynamics and relationships. Collective action can help organizations and communities realize their greatest potential, which hinges on learning that involves collaboration and dedication to democratic values (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Narayan & Woolcock, 2000).

A metaphorical analysis of organizational development principles and leadership styles can illuminate potential directions for change. By applying metaphors to an organizational change endeavor, Morgan (1993) unveiled obstacles that help explain the difficulties in pursuing institutional transformation. The compass is one such metaphor for leaders. Covey, Merrill, and Merrill (1994) emphasized the importance of time, yet the compass provides a profound symbol because leaders need to understand vision, values, principles, mission, conscience, and direction. Complacency, immobility, defiance, and pessimism are fed by arrogance, fear, anger, and hesitation. Kotter and Cohen (2002) promoted the value of urgency to energize organizational change.

A unified team is another powerful metaphor for leadership. A unified team can resist power struggles and overcome political barriers with a shared organizational vision. Organizational goals, such as building positive relationships and rewarding excellence, should remain at the forefront of group endeavors. Providing incentives for contributing to organizational goals is essential. Acknowledging shortcomings and potential threats in the change process is crucial for any organization or team to assess its progress towards fulfilling its mission and remaining true to its vision.

Developing a clearer vision and mission is critical to develop a framework for moving forward with organizational strategies for constructive change. Lippitt (1982) presented visioning as a strategy in which group members develop their ideas of what the organization should become. Daloz (1999) also presented visioning as a strategy that could be employed to unleash group members' imaginations.

Presenting a clear vision can facilitate change. Cummings and Worley (2000) proposed that organizations must "create a readiness for change" by sensitizing people to the pressures of change, illustrating the discrepancy between current conditions and more desirable ones, and communicating positive, realistic expectations related to the advantages of the proposed changes. French and Bell (1984) advocated using structured activities that lead to achieving values, assumptions, and goals when pursuing organizational change. People's skills must be honed to make them more effective as change agents.

Change requires that organizations provide individuals and teams with the authority that they need to make competent decisions in a positive and supportive environment. Leaders could contribute more to the development of members of their

organizations by increasing flexibility and building trust through empowerment. Both personal empowerment and group empowerment are essential if organizations are to develop structures that fully integrate the abilities of individuals and harness the enthusiasm and talents of teams. The approach of empowerment leads to improved satisfaction and serves as a key to building a positive climate and furthering organizational performance. As with implementing other aspects of change, success in personal and group empowerment requires awareness of organizational context and organizational dynamics.

Strategic structuring can help leaders to attend to the varying demands placed on their organizations, while also understanding and valuing the importance of contextual processes and systems so that they can achieve greater balance and harmony. The most successful organizations are those that are consistently cognizant of change and adapt accordingly so that they can best align with shifting expectations in a turbulent landscape.

Gibson and Birkinshaw (2004) proposed that “stretch, discipline, support, and trust” are key characteristics in organizations, and they claimed, “the attributes of context influence performance through the development of ambidexterity” (p. 214). Indeed, a collective vision that is developed by team members collaboratively in a supportive environment could serve as a foundation on which individuals partake in the quest for greater potential for their organizations. The changes in science and technology have transformed virtually all organizations and require ambidexterity in managing change of virtually everyone in the contemporary workforce.

Structural barriers can hinder learning and the capacity to incorporate technology (Bell et al., 2000). Capacity can be built through structural alignment in adapting to

dynamic environmental conditions (Morgan, 1998). Productive opportunities are manifested through technology (Forbes & Domm, 2004). These structural barriers can be addressed through systems theory, which can be used to explain the dynamics in all aspects of society, including technology and its complexities (French et al., 2005). People need skills and training to be able to harness what technology can offer and to gain access to its benefits.

Science and Technology

Science and technology have had a considerable impact on almost all aspects of society. This indubitable relationship presses everyone interested in leadership and transformational learning to consider future implications of emerging scientific and technological advancements, while encouraging people to pursue positive applications that will contribute to their future.

This is an extremely complicated world, and it is becoming more complex because of the connection between science and technology and the immense potential to contribute to organizational and community transformation. The world is changing dramatically with the ongoing evolution of modern technologies, which are fostering greater societal interactions and increased globalization (Barrett & Peterson, 2000; Bierema, 2002; Christmann, 1998). The assimilation of science and technology within organizations and communities has been positive in many regards, yet challenges have surfaced that require ongoing vigilance.

Technology can positively affect organizational learning and development. Human expression and connectivity can be enriched through technological resources (French, Bell, & Zawacki, 2005; Maccoby, 2003). Enhanced organizational learning and

constructive societal transformation require that organizational leaders cultivate understanding by highlighting knowledge through technology (Nonaka, 1994). A review of literature relevant to science, technology, and society revealed that conscientious and supportive leadership is required for people to guide organizations positively (Bakhtin, 1981; Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Fullan, 2001). Such guidance involves far more than simply keeping abreast of technological innovations; constructive organizational development and transformation also require changing habitual attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors (Bourdreau & Couillard, 1999).

Technology can help to build organizational networks and to bolster community partnerships (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Robinson, 1995). Communication technologies provide momentum for realizing stronger connections that can assist us in realizing societal possibilities (Deetz, 1995). Daniels and Spiker (1991) illustrated the dynamics of strategic communication and its importance to enhancing organizational and community knowledge. Blacker (1995) addressed the concept of organizational knowledge and the importance of technology to contemporary networking. Organizations will have to become more open to applying dynamic technologies to advance globally (Barrett & Peterson, 2000). The challenge as a society is to become more adept at harnessing technology to help achieve the deep transformations needed within communities. This can include building capacity for people to take advantage of the potential benefits of cutting-edge technology.

Leaders must continuously attend to organizational structures that reflect the accessibility of technology, thereby fostering a climate in which team members feel empowered to share knowledge so that everyone contributes to organizational and

societal advancement. Leaders should extend their commitment to organizational vision from an international angle so that strategic directions may be realized through broader environmental, political, and social perspectives. Knowledge gained through continuous research and dialogue often challenges established paradigms so that people may better understand technology and its implications for society (Kuhn, 2003).

Technology arguably has created greater distance between people and has fostered a more disengaged society because of the form of interaction through correspondence that is produced through advanced technological means (Bakhtin, 1981). Such a judgment about social alienation and interpersonal distance must be balanced with the excitement that is created through the vibrant dialogue made possible in an interactive community through technological advances. Stronger global partnerships can result through vibrant interaction that is focused on the development of a knowledgeable society through the assimilation of technology.

Communication and Global Networks

Organizational learning and community development depend on shared knowledge and global networks that may be strengthened through a greater understanding of science and the integration of technological advances in relation to societal issues. The efforts to strengthen such partnerships must entail an international focus to inform local issues better. Paradoxically, the accelerating trend toward globalization makes it imperative to apply technology and knowledge at the local level. Fortunately, technology can assist organizations and communities to attend to local efforts, albeit from a global platform. It can be a tool in spreading a vision of what is possible.

Leaders must be equipped to guide organizations toward a stronger vision, one that includes specifications as to how technology can help to support strategic objectives. An exploration of emerging technologies, particularly those associated with knowledge-management software programs and relational databases, has illustrated how technology can help leaders to articulate and manage organizational vision, objectives, and strategy more effectively (Castells, 1996; Nonaka, 1994).

Developing and implementing an organizational vision based on collaborative networks is more important than ever before because of increased international connectivity (Christmann, 1998; Pinkett, 2000). Organizations that do not embrace globalization and the increasingly sophisticated technological capabilities will be surpassed by organizations that realize the possibilities presented through such technological advancements (Nonaka, 1994). Technology continues to have an impact on the daily activities and the overall communication possibilities with others. Increasingly, technology serves as a means for enhanced connectivity and collaboration with others.

Synchronous communication has become a necessary feature of effective organizational practice, particularly when the advantages of technology and knowledge appear to have stronger affiliations with asynchronous methods (Mann & Lam, 2003). The ways in which workers learn and select appropriate technology will affect knowledge management and the ways in which others are expected or forced to respond (Blacker, 1995). Similarly, considered responses from asynchronous methods, particularly “knowledge bases,” are selected by leaders as the appropriate source in certain circumstances, possibly without providing feedback or reinforcement to the providers or

contributors of that information (Davenport & Prusak, 1998). This has implications for the whole question of the ownership of knowledge.

Farrell and Holkner (2002) proposed that people gain knowledge in what they called “hybrid workspaces.” Hybrid workspaces “bring together physical place and cyberspace in communication networks” (Castells, 2001, p. 131). These processes of hybridization in organizations entail friction, struggle, accommodation, and adaptation. Farrell and Holkner (2002) viewed “knowledge as social action that is generated, mediated, negotiated, and traded amongst people in the politically charged dynamic of hybrid communities” (p. 10). These changing environments routinely “bring together physical place and cyber place” through communication networks. As a result, “traditional struggles over knowledge and knowing are inflected by communications technologies in powerful but unobtrusive ways” (Castells, 2001, p. 131).

Farrell and Holkner (2002) looked “closely at the part that communications technologies play in the construction of knowledge, community, and identity between and within workspaces” (p. 11). Shotter (1996) argued that leaders should “consider the ways people adopt, modify, and are changed by the technologies [that] they implement in cyberspace” (p. 12). The ways in which people are encouraged to contribute to dispersed communities that are hybridized should be explored (Farrell & Holkner). It is important to consider the ways that relationships are shaped and constrained by the communication frameworks now emerging through advanced technology.

Communities are also, like organizations, in the process of hybridizing. Traditional working communities that relied exclusively on geographical and temporal proximity, as well as shared practice, are changing because of technological

advancements (Kretzmann & McKnight, 2005). These communities now occupy hybridizing work spaces, traditional work spaces in which local communication practice is inflected with the practices required of, or developed within, the global webs of communication made possible and necessary by new communications technologies (Castells, 1996). Communities are interwoven with technology and are subject to changing expectations and boundaries. Farell and Holkner (2002) paid particular attention to aspects of uncertainty and the characteristics of “change agents” in the diffusion of innovations.

Christmann (1998) explained that “an information vision is a clear statement of how an enhanced information base will help the [organization] achieve its strategic objectives” (p. 47). To accomplish this, investments in technology should support organizational goals and strategies. Christmann illustrated the importance of formal assessment, planning, and communicating, not only in developing an information vision for the organization, but also in instilling in key leaders the realization that such a vision is important and merits commitment from the organization as a whole. Technology offers unprecedented opportunities for knowledge management, and savvy leaders are quick to benefit from them.

Knowledge Management and Organizational Structures

Bourdreau and Couillard (1999) claimed that key leaders need to guide the transformation of organizations into knowledge organizations. This requires reexamining and possibly modifying organizational structure, fostering a climate in which people feel free to share knowledge, and making operating assumptions explicit. To shift to a knowledge-management perspective through systems integration requires developing

teams and designing knowledge and data architecture, designing technical architecture, and facilitating organizational learning (Bourdreau & Couillard, pp. 30–31).

Applying technology to organizational development initiatives is significant because shared knowledge and partnerships fostered through greater integration of technological advances are strengthened by such initiatives (Blacker, 1995; Castells, 1996). The nature and function of collaborative groups matter because organizations generate knowledge that drives the knowledge economy (Pinkett, 2000). It is important that leaders value the importance of all members of society in generating new knowledge and innovation.

The complicated relation between social theory and social studies of science is obvious in discussions about the complexity of science and technology. Discussions such as these also tend to dramatize the “cleavage between social theory and social studies of science and technology” (Farrell & Holkner, 2002, p. 9). As a result, the boundaries between social theory and social studies of science become more visible. Farrell and Holkner urged society to strive for better integration of the social and the natural aspects of science and technology. Morgan (1998) claimed that organizations could be regarded as closed, autopoietic systems because they operate with specific forms of communication and use a stringent process to evaluate these communications.

Bell et al. (2000) proposed that systems theory could provide a framework in which to analyze the evolutionary mechanisms that steer the dynamics of a scientific system. The connection between science and society results in a constant process of “hybridization” (Farrell & Holkner, 2002). Therefore, to analyze scientific practice, one must consider societal context. Farrell and Holkner claimed that the “common trait of

both works is that they emphasize the mutual interplay between expectations, credibility, social and scientific values, and the actions of individuals and organizations” (p. 10). It is apparent that technology shapes society significantly through this ongoing process.

Narayan and Woolcock (2000) stressed the mutual shaping of science and its social environment. The former depends on the latter by conforming to the expectations of the environment. Farrell and Holkner (2002) claimed that this shaping of science by social environment forms the basis for legitimizing science, which is always required for science to have access to the resources that science requires. The multiple and eventually contradictory expectations of the environment comprise “rules of appropriateness” that restrict the pool of social practices and influence the internal dynamics of science (Farrell & Holkner, p. 7). Science and technology restructure society, as is evident in the millennial traits that emerged in this study.

Organizational environments and structures have changed dramatically due to sweeping and rapid growth in information and communication technologies, along with the increased globalization made possible through such technologies. The advent of these technologies has led to a fundamental restructuring of organizations and changes in how performance is viewed and measured (Demarie & Hitt, 2002). The flexibility and adaptability made possible through technology are increasingly important to organizations that operate in dynamic environments subject to rapid and often unpredictable changes (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004). Technology has changed organizational infrastructures in ways that are both empowering and overwhelming.

Demarie and Hitt (2002) delineated ways in which organizations can expect to derive benefits from the increased use of technology, as well as what shows no positive

correlation with the increased use of technology or may even create new problems and challenges for organizations. Possible benefits of advanced technology include an expanded capability for virtual participation, which allows individuals to serve as more integrated team members. Technology is often associated with increased adaptability in forming strategic alliances. Such strategic alliances are crucial in the international arena (Demarie & Hitt, 2002). However, this openness to forming new strategic alliances is not always successful. An increase in the number of strategic alliances, by itself, provides no assurance of increased organizational effectiveness. Quality is more important than quantity, and despite advances in technology, human capital remains any organization's greatest asset.

The next section will review the literature on community building and how it affects leadership, diversity, capacity building, and organizational structure.

Community Building

Much of the recent literature on leadership has examined the value for an organizational leader in fostering ties with the community rather than focusing solely on parochial concerns within the organization. Much of this literature implicitly has supported a view of leadership based on an ethics of the responsibility of those in power to serve others, including those whose interests and perspectives have not traditionally been served or honored by those in positions of power. Diversity and multiculturalism are values that are upheld implicitly or explicitly in much of the recent literature on leadership.

Community Development and Capacity Building

Greenleaf (1977) advocated shared leadership that embraces the importance of people of varying viewpoints collaborating on organizational and community development. This shared-leadership approach is not based primarily upon power or upon formal authority. Powley, Cooperrider, and Fry (2001) and Hammond and Royal (2001) also underscored the value of civic engagement. They encouraged group interactions between those in organizations and in the community that lead to collectively designed directions for organizational and community transformation. Duck (2001) proposed that leaders could create a culture for change by communicating positive, realistic expectations related to the advantages of the transformation. Duck viewed such civic engagement as critical.

Imagine Chicago is a shining example of the potential of civic engagement and community development initiatives (Browne, 2001; Ludema, 1994). Bliss Browne led members of organizations on a journey of discovery to create a shared vision for Chicago's future, beginning in 1991, by organizing a conference that involved experienced community builders who were committed to civic engagement and development. Browne (2001) contended that cities "are a living symbol of our ability to imagine and create" and "an incarnation of human capacity and diversity" (p. 78). The mission statement of *Imagine Chicago* read as follows:

Imagine Chicago is a nonprofit organization, created in 1992, and dedicated to cultivating hope and civic commitment. It enlists young people and others who want to make a difference to bring to light the experience, hopes, and aspirations of Chicago's citizens and to act on that imagination in ways that benefit

individuals, communities, and the city as a whole. This work is done in partnership with local organizations—schools, churches, community groups, cultural institutions—and serves as the catalyst to encourage people to think about themselves as creators of the city’s future and to form communities in which that future can be created and the ownership of that future shared. (Browne, 2001, p. 78)

Imagine Chicago was just one model that showed how to pursue mutual trust and cooperation to develop solutions to community challenges by enhancing collaborative learning and creating networks (Browne, 2001; Ludema, 1993; Ludema, 1994).

Hammond and Royal (2001) provided examples of other cities throughout the United States and in various places in the world that patterned their community-development initiatives on the successful model of *Imagine Chicago*. Foster (2001) described *Imagine Dallas* as a “catalytic process” that “[ignited] the civic imagination of a broad spectrum of community builders” who were “inspired to shape deeply held hopes into opportunities for action” (p. 93). *Imagine South Carolina* was “uniquely designed to focus on creative conversation between people” (Stewart & Royal, 2001, p. 105). Hall (2001) praised the *Banana Kelly* organization in the South Bronx because

the enhanced imaginative capacity that flows from this relational process builds engaged, alert, self-aware, [and] conscious young citizens prepared for the 21st century, [in which] softer skills, [such as] effective team participation and an intimate, informed understanding of one’s own learning, [are] required. (p. 117)

Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) introduced asset-based community development as a coherent strategy for building community capacity. They proposed that an asset-

based approach leads to empowered communities that are more successful at developing capacity and securing critical resources. Community development relies on engagement and cooperation, and it embraces the value of developmental leadership because of the nurturing essence of collaborative environments (Belenky et al., 1997). Positive dialogue between organizational and community groups is vital to promote understanding, connections, and collaboration (French et al., 2005; Hammond & Royal, 2001). Positive dialogue requires careful consideration of and sensitivity to the environment and respect for the cultural aspects of particular communities (Pinkett, 2000). Many have argued in the literature that these traits of cultural sensitivity are essential for effective leadership.

Leaders face many challenges in mobilizing support for social and community transformation. Apathy has increased, and community engagement has suffered (Engel, 2000). Collaboration and knowledge can strengthen the leader's courage to deal with critical issues through social transformation (Freire, 1996). The very rapid pace of social transformation engendered by technological shifts has exacerbated generational differences.

Generations

To understand the generational differences between the subjects in this study and those of other generations in (or retired from) today's workforce, it is necessary to review them. These "generations" are social constructions imposed upon reality differently by different onlookers. Those four generations are composed of members of the 1) silent generation, 2) baby boomers, 3) generation X, and the generation referred to as 4) millennials or generation Y. The participants in this study were members of the millennial generation who were near the cusp with generation X.

The Silent Generation

The silent generation includes people born from 1925 to 1945. This term was coined in a *Time* cover story in November 1951. Most adolescents were driven out of the workplace during the Depression and into the nation's rapidly expanding secondary schools. For the first time, bureaucratic innovations such as child accounting and age-grading (grouping children by age and aptitude) came to rural areas in response to the need to forestall the entry of young people into the workforce for as long as possible (Lassonde, 2007). Because of the times and the political changes, for the first time in America, children were allowed to be children and have childhoods.

Baby Boomers

Baby boomers were born into national wealth and power, raised on the promise of their limitless potential and self-worth, reared on television and advertising, and enthralled by the wonders of modern science and medicine (Zeitiz, 2005, p. 48). Boomers were children born during the post-World War II baby boom between 1946 and 1964. One thing that made the baby boomer generation different from the silent generation was urbanization, one of the “master trends” of the 20th century (Lowery & DeFleur, 1995, p. 6). Industrialized societies are “culturally rootless” and “personally anonymous”; this altered traditional lifestyles. The increasingly mobile, differentiated, and bureaucratized society tended to reduce close personal ties (Lowery & DeFleur, pp. 7–8).

Baby boomers share an experience of culture and communication that is defined by media usage and a desire to explore themselves and their world. The boomer experience may be linked to what economist Richard Florida (2004) has called the “creative class”—a new global economy based on creative work. Boomer identity is

correlated more with participation in historical events (such as Woodstock and anti-Vietnam War demonstrations) than with standing back and watching (Howe & Strauss, 1992). Boomers' identity hinges on metaphors of action and achievement. Boomers are constructed as the prime movers of recent American history—as “reformers,” “activists,” and even “revolutionaries” (Oake, 2004).

Generation X

Generation X includes babies born between 1965 and 1979. According to *Time* magazine, Xers have trouble making decisions. “They crave entertainment, but their attention span is as short as one zap of a TV dial. . . . They possess only a hazy sense of their own identity, but a monumental preoccupation with all the problems the preceding generation will leave for them to fix” (Scott, 1990, p. 56).

It appears that the deviance of Xer subcultural bias lies in its obstinate privileging of “watching” over “doing.” While baby boomers are mythologized as those who made history, “Xer identity is presided over by the trope of the ‘slacker,’ the indolent, apathetic, couch-dwelling TV addict” (Oake, 2004). For Cannon (1994), what gives generation X its specificity is the fact that its identity gels around a particular experience of popular culture in a media-saturated world. He wrote, “[D]escribed by some as the first global generation, they are joined together not by a common ideology, but rather a sophisticated knowledge of consumer products” (p. 2).

Generation Y/Millennial Generation

Generation Y, also known as millennials, is defined from a number of studies as “special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, conventional, pressured, achieving, and optimistic” (Wilson, 2004). This generation was born c. 1980–1999, according to many

definitions, although some research places the start date sooner and end date later.

Sometimes this generation is defined within the birth years of 1982–2002, but some say those born as early as 1979 show millennial traits (Johnson, 2006). Most college students are now part of this generation, often labeled generation Y, but also sometimes referred to as the Net generation, the digital generation, the echo boom generation, or the millennial generation.

As profiled in Howe and Strauss's (2000) watershed book, *Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation*, this generation is unique because its members are more ambitious and optimistic than members of generation X. Millennials comprise the most ethnically diverse generation in history. They favor different values and learning styles than their predecessors. They are the largest child generation in American history, currently making up 34 percent of the country's population, and they are the most technologically savvy (Howe & Strauss, pp. 1–2).

Howe and Strauss (2000) offered seven characteristics of millennials, each of which has implications for the kind of people they will be. First, millennials have a sense that they are special because they have been told that they are vital to the nation's sense of purpose. Because they are vital for the future, they are in the public eye; because this generation is special, it has been sheltered—the second characteristic of millennials. This generation has been involved in a national safety movement, “starting with the early 1980s child-abuse frenzy, continuing through the explosion of kid safety rules and devices, and now climaxing with a post-Columbine lockdown of public schools” (p. 43). Third, millennials are confident; they are part of an optimistic generation, trusting that they will have a bright future and become increasingly empowered with age.

This optimism is connected to achievement, which is the fourth characteristic of millennials. Tangible achievements are important to this generation—and their parents—as preschool rankings at age three and standardized test scores at age seventeen have become regular status markers. Fifth, this generation is team-oriented, which has been fed by “a new classroom emphasis on group learning” (p. 44) and technology that makes it possible to be accessible at virtually any time. Sixth, millennials are conventional, “taking pride in improving their behavior and more comfortable with their parents’ values than any other generation in living memory” (p. 44). More than any other generation in living memory, millennials are happy to accept authority and dutifully jump through hoops to achieve. Finally, this generation is pressured—perhaps the characteristic engendered by the other six. Millennials are pressured to “study hard, avoid personal risks, and take full advantage of the collective opportunities [that] adults are offering them” (p. 44). Johnson (2006) posited that millennials have often been made the “trophy children” of boomer parents and a hopeful nation.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a review of the literature that pertains to leadership, transformation learning, organizational learning, community building, and generational differences. It has examined how leaders manage change, build teams, and forge partnerships in their organizations and communities. The following chapter presents the study’s methodology.

Chapter III: Methodology

Introduction

Chapter II reviewed the literature. The purpose of this chapter is to present the methods used in the study. The research methodology addresses the following research questions:

The primary research question was:

- *How do emerging leaders from a variety of organizations and community groups define and enact their leadership styles?*

The secondary research questions were:

- *How do various life experiences and the actions of others influence emerging organizational and community leaders?*
- *How do various learning opportunities affect emerging organizational and community leaders?*
- *How is emergent organizational and community leadership fostered through a collegiate leadership development program?*

The chapter is divided into the following sections: 1) a description of participants, 2) the design of the study, 3) methods and procedures, 4) protection of human subjects, 5) validity and reliability, 6) data analysis, and 7) conclusion.

Description of the Participants

Purposive sampling was utilized in selecting the six emerging leaders in various fields so that the cases would be information-rich and in-depth (Merriam, 1998). This sampling allowed for selection of cases from varying organizations (Creswell, 1998). This sample included six women between the ages of 22 and 27 who had completed a

collegiate leadership development program presented through a nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, DC, in partnership with one of several major research universities in the United States of America. These emerging leaders were chosen because they served as student fellows in a collegiate leadership development program and as leaders within various educational, business, and community organizations.

The participants were prescreened by telephone and through e-mail to identify emerging leaders who agreed to participate in the study on leadership. These emerging leaders were appropriate subjects for this study because they provided insights that could eventually lead to the possible development of a theory or the creation of a model about constructive change that can occur through transformative learning experiences (Mezirow, 2000).

Design of the Study

Phenomenological research seeks to delineate the structure of phenomena (Creswell, 1994, p. 157; Merriam, 2001, p. 158). Case-study research, one form of phenomenological study, can be a useful way to highlight the lived experiences and meanings assigned by participants through an appreciative lens (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1996; Gergen & Gergen, 2003). By its nature, case-study research is context-specific, as it is based on the examination of phenomena that occur in unique settings and under unique circumstances (Merriam, 1998; Miles & Heberman, 1994). As such, case-study research can be useful for generating hypotheses for future research.

These six case studies are particularistic, as their focus is on a particular situation, event, program, or phenomenon (Merriam, 2001). A case study is a way to concentrate on how a emerging leadership group confronted problems (Shaw, 1978). These case

studies are also descriptive in that the end product was a rich, “thick” description of the phenomenon as seen under this study’s lens (Merriam, 2001). This incorporation of a phenomenological approach could further contribute to emergent theory or a theoretical model as data are collected and analysis confirms or refutes already identified patterns or reveals additional phenomena (Cranton, 1994; Creswell, 1994). Finally, the case-study approach was selected for the study because of its uniqueness and for what it could reveal about a phenomenon or knowledge that could not otherwise be accessed (Merriam).

As the present study relied upon inductive reasoning, Merriam’s (2001) comments on the role of inductive reasoning in qualitative research seem relevant. Qualitative research, employing inductive reasoning, “builds abstractions, concepts, hypotheses, or theories rather than [testing] existing theory. Qualitative studies are often undertaken because there is a lack of theory, or existing theory fails to adequately explain a phenomenon” (p. 7). The literature on leadership has not adequately explained the conditions conducive to helping emerging millennial leaders in organizations become effective at leadership. The present study attempted to uncover new findings from these case studies.

Methods and Procedures

Purposive sampling (Merriam, 1998) was used to select six emerging organizational leaders in various fields for case-study research. The study was conducted through in-depth interviews, leadership journals, artifacts in the form of participant leadership creeds, and a focus-group discussion. All subjects were emerging leaders who participated in and completed a collegiate leadership development program that involved extensive community service activities. The process was completely voluntary, and

participants were informed that they could discontinue participation at any time and for any reason.

Purposive sampling was used to generate data-rich, in-depth interviews, research journals, artifacts, and a focus group with participants who represented different organizational perspectives. This diversity of organizational affiliations increased the odds that the participants' insights might be applicable to more diverse settings (Creswell, 1998). The detailed, nuanced data thus generated through qualitative research is known as thick description (Patton, 2002).

The researcher met initially with each participant individually for approximately 30 minutes to secure consent and to provide an orientation to this 45-day research project. Interviews were conducted at a later time with each participant for a total of approximately 90 minutes. Each participant was asked to keep a research journal for 30 days from the date of the orientation to reflect on her leadership experiences and learning insights, to write within 30 days of the orientation meeting a statement or creed of approximately 500 words that summarized her beliefs about leadership, and to participate in a 90-minute focus group session held no later than 45 days after the orientation meeting to discuss themes that emerged from the interviews, leadership creeds, and research journals with her former collegiate leadership development program colleagues. The focus group was designed to generate additional insights from the participants as a collective to augment the data acquired individually from the respondents through the interviews, leadership creeds, and research journals.

Participation in the study spanned 45 days from the date of the initial orientation meeting to the focus group, the first and last parts of the research. Participants kept a

research journal to reflect on their leadership experiences and learning insights for 30 days from the date of the orientation. At the end of that 30-day period, participants submitted their research journal, along with their leadership creed (a personal statement of approximately 500 words that highlighted their leadership beliefs and style) to the researcher. The focus group was held 15 days later to allow participants to share their leadership creeds and to reflect collectively upon their experiences and insights regarding emergent organizational and community leadership.

In-depth interviews were a primary data-collection method (Appendix A). All interviews were recorded, with participants' consent, and these audiotapes were transcribed. They were asked to make entries into their research journals (Appendix B) for the 30 days following their initial orientation. In addition to the in-depth interviews, participants prepared a reflection artifact (a leadership creed of approximately 500 words that summarized personal beliefs about leadership) and a research journal related to leadership experiences and insights (Appendix C). In addition, participants were interviewed in a focus group (Appendix D), which was also recorded on an audiotape, with procedures to ensure confidentiality, as enumerated below.

The interviews comprised the locus of the study, a comparative study that looked for recurring themes. All interviews were recorded, with participants' informed consent, and the audiotapes were transcribed by the researcher, followed by member checking by the participants and additional checking by an outside reviewer. The audiotapes were destroyed after their contents had been transcribed. Identifying information was removed from the transcriptions. These documents shall be stored in a locked cabinet for seven years, after which time, they shall be destroyed.

All participants also participated in a voluntary focus-group discussion about their experiences and perspectives about leadership. This focus-group discussion was held approximately 45 days after the initial interview. This focus group was conducted by an experienced facilitator and also included a skilled observer. As with the individual interviews, the focus group was recorded on an audiotape. The audiotape was destroyed after transcription. Identifying information was removed from the transcripts. The transcripts shall be stored in a locked cabinet for seven years, after which time, they shall be destroyed.

Protection of Human Subjects

Risks and Benefits

There were minimal risks to participating in this study. Some people feel minor discomfort due to being recorded via audiotape while being interviewed, so this discomfort was a potential risk of participation. Also, participants risked becoming critical of their individual style of leadership through the self-reflection required as part of this research. Conversely, they might have gained confidence and benefited from increased appreciation of their own style of leadership after reflecting upon it during this research. Therefore, benefits from this study included opportunities to learn from self-reflection on leadership experiences and styles (i.e., greater self-awareness and possibly professional development). An additional benefit of the study was the likelihood of contributing to the body of knowledge regarding emergent organizational and community leadership and how it is understood and is being applied by a new generation of leaders. This study could also provide insight into how collegiate leadership development programs can promote new leadership paradigms in organizations and communities.

Potential Risks and Discomforts

Various demands on the time of participants were made during this 45-day research project, starting with a 30-minute orientation, which was followed by a 90-minute interview. The data-gathering process continued with the completion of a research journal and the leadership creed within 30 days of the orientation meeting, and it ended with a focus group. As part of the focus-group session, participants had the opportunity to present their leadership creeds and to share their thoughts concerning leadership and their learning experiences with their former collegiate leadership development program colleagues.

It was expected that respondents would honor the confidentiality of the study by not repeating or attributing the remarks of others in a manner that would identify participants. This risk of compromising their anonymity and confidentiality to the public was alleviated by using pseudonyms for all attributed remarks distributed as part of this dissertation. Another potential risk was that participants might have become critical of their own leadership style through the self-reflection required as part of this study. The interview and the focus group session were recorded via audiotape because all participants indicated that this would not cause them discomfort and did not feel that this would pose any risk to them whatsoever. No other risks, discomforts, or inconveniences were expected, other than the time it took for each respondent to participate in the orientation, interview, focus group, and to prepare the reflection journal and leadership creed.

Potential Benefits to Participants and to Society

Benefits from this study included opportunities to learn from self-reflection on leadership experiences and styles (i.e., greater self-awareness and possibly professional development). Additional benefits of the study were the likelihood of contributing to the body of knowledge regarding leadership and how it is understood and is being used by a new generation of leaders. This study could also provide insight into how collegiate leadership development programs promote new leadership paradigms in organizations.

Volunteers did not receive any compensation for participating in this study, and there was no guarantee or promise that participants would personally benefit from this research. However, all participants were informed that the results of the study could help develop understanding about emerging organizational and community leaders. In addition, participants benefited from an increased understanding or appreciation of their own leadership style through the reflections required as part of this research project through interviews, leadership journals, and artifacts in the form of leadership creeds. Gaining insights from the experiences and reflections of others through the focus group was another potential benefit to participants.

Informed Consent

The adults interviewed were consenting participants in this study. For participants to be fully informed, they needed to understand that this study identified selected organizational and community leaders who participated in a recent collegiate leadership development program. They were informed that they would participate in a personal introductory orientation and an in-depth interview. They also voluntarily participated in a focus group about their experiences and perspectives about leadership. In addition, they

were asked to keep a leadership journal and to develop and share a leadership creed as a reflection artifact, which were also voluntary.

Participants were assured that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from participation in the study at any time. There were no special or vulnerable populations. There were no incentives for participation in the study.

Participation and Withdrawal

All participants in this research study were free to withdraw their consent and to withdraw from participating at any time, with no penalty or loss of benefits to which they might otherwise be entitled. Participants were informed that they could also refuse to answer any questions that they did not want to answer and could remain in the study.

Confidentiality

Any information obtained in connection with this study that could be identified with participants remained confidential to the public and would have been disclosed only with permission of the participants or as required by law. As part of the dissertation, all factors that could be used to personally identify participants were removed to ensure their anonymity to the public. Audiotapes of all interviews and the focus group session assisted the researcher with the analysis and interpretation of findings. All audiotapes of the interviews and the focus group session were destroyed after transcription of the recordings. Transcripts were cleaned of any identifiable indicators and will remain stored in a locked cabinet in a secure location for seven years, after which time, they will be destroyed.

Additional data collected as part of this research study that could be identified with participants were coded so that they were not identifiable to the public in any reports

that will emanate from this study. Leadership creeds and research journals were also redacted of identifiable indicators and will remain stored in a locked cabinet in a secure location for seven years, after which time, they will be destroyed. The anonymity and confidentiality of the participants in this study have been diligently protected by using pseudonyms for all attributed remarks distributed as part of the dissertation. Furthermore, it was mutually agreed that participants would respect the confidentiality of this research study by not repeating or attributing the remarks of others in any manner that would identify respondents. Therefore, by partaking in this research study, all participants agreed to respect and maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of all participants.

Validity and Reliability

Threats to the trustworthiness of the study, such as potential bias and political implications, had to be addressed and minimized. It was important to carefully analyze the data obtained from the interviews, reflection artifacts, and personal journals for emerging themes and patterns. Yin (1994) summarized four measures for assessing the quality of research designs: construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability.

Construct validity concerns “establishing correct operational measures for the concepts being studied” (Yin, 1994, p. 33). Internal validity concerns whether research findings are accurate measures of reality. External validity establishes “the domain to which a study’s findings can be generalized” (Yin, p. 33), although in the case of any qualitative study, this would be subject to further empirical research because findings from qualitative research are suggestive, but not projectable. Yin’s solution to this

dilemma was to suggest that case studies could help contribute to theory, as no case, no matter how it is selected, can be said to be representative.

The reliability of the findings would mean that “the data-collection procedures could be repeated, with the same results,” and this applies to case studies, as well as to quantitative research (Yin, 1994, p. 33). Content analysis, discourse analysis, and the construction of categories, along with cross-case analysis and metaphorical analysis, were part of the constant comparative analysis.

Creswell (1994) suggested that specific data analysis should search for patterns through comparisons of various expectations predicted from theory to garner potential explanations about particular cases over time. The analysis of data should be undertaken systematically to arrange materials in a fashion that would allow for the articulation of the information through an accurate and meaningful process (Merriam, 2001).

Theories that explain the data were incorporated and used to develop interpretations and conclusions. Predominant theories that explain the data were incorporated. This study should help to contribute to the literature and body of knowledge in this important arena.

The internal validity or credibility of this research was achieved when participants in the study recognized the results as reflective of their experiences through member checking (Cranton, 1994; Creswell, 1994). Each participant was provided with her own case study to review. This provided the participants with an opportunity to review the data collected from the interviews, research journals, leadership creeds, and the focus group, to make sure that the information was captured correctly. They were also able to ensure that the researcher’s perceptions and assumptions were not interfering with their

description of their own leadership experiences. All participants reviewed the data and validated the results.

Triangulation of data sources contributed to the credibility because information was gathered through various sources. These sources often show different social or ontological phenomena as opposed to measuring the same phenomena and producing a numerical and statistical measurement (Mason, 2002). This qualitative research study incorporated an initial orientation of 30 minutes and an in-depth interview of 90 minutes with each participant, as well as a personal reflection artifact, a research journal, and a focus group session (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). A leadership creed and the research journal were assessed through content analysis, which in qualitative research focuses on “the communication of meaning” (Merriam, 2001, p. 160).

The consistency and accuracy of a study imply the dependability of the research through the means of replication (Merriam, 2001). The process of continuous auditing supported the external validity of the study by ensuring that the outcomes were consistent and dependable. Transference of the research findings is important because the validity of the study depends on the notion that it has application and meaning for others.

It was important to minimize any researcher bias that could have skewed responses from participants and threatened the trustworthiness of the study, such as potential bias and political distortions (Cranton, 1994). This concern was addressed by utilizing peer review, with 10 reviewers and member checking. Through this peer-review process, the researcher took the feedback into account and utilized the feedback to either validate the analysis or make changes. Because organizational practitioners serving as

researchers have a stake in supporting the advancement of this arena, it is important to acknowledge “the value-laden nature” of research (Creswell, 1994). Despite its limitations, this study holds promise for increasing understanding about transformational learning and effective organizational and community leadership.

Data Analysis

The data analysis consisted of a description of each case, key themes, and interpretations made by the researcher. After the transcription of the audiotapes and after reviewing the journals and artifacts, as well as the data from the focus group, the researcher analyzed these data sources for the emerging themes. Guba and Lincoln (1985) described the process as heuristic. This means that the unit should reveal relevant information to the study or stimulate the reader to think beyond a particular bit of information. This unit should be able to stand by itself so that it can be interpretable in the absence of any additional information other than a broad understanding of the context in which inquiry is carried (Guba & Lincoln).

The researcher read through each interview, journal, and artifact, as well as the transcription of the focus group. The researcher then wrote comments, notes, and observations in the margins of those documents (Merriam, 1998). These notations were to serve “to isolate the initially most striking, if not ultimately most important, parts of the data” (LeCompte, Preissle, & Tesch, 1993, p. 26). The researcher grouped the comments and notes into clusters or categories that reflected the purpose of the study and answered the research questions. Guba and Lincoln (1981) suggested guidelines for developing categories. The number of people who mentioned something or the frequency with which something arose in the data indicates an important dimension. Next, the

audience may determine what is important, which means that some categories will appear to various audiences as more or less credible or salient. Third, some categories will stand out because of their uniqueness and should be retained. Fourth, certain categories may reveal areas of inquiry not otherwise recognized or provide a unique leverage on an otherwise common problem (Guba & Lincoln, 1985).

As the focus of the research was case study, the aggregated diverse case studies were placed together under a common conceptual framework so that the findings would be cumulative and could be used to identify what is already known, what it is that is not known, and what it is that is suspected (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). The researcher determined the criteria by cases that were selected for analysis and would require the definition of the phenomenon under investigation (Guba & Lincoln). This was defined through the research questions.

Conclusion

As part of its examination of emerging leaders, this study looked at the body of empirical research on organizational leadership and transformative learning. In particular, the study focused on the behaviors, characteristics, values, beliefs, and practices of emerging leaders. This study highlighted the experiences, ideas, values, and practices that these emerging leaders believed had transformed them into effective leaders. The intent of this study was to further the knowledge of effective organizational leadership and transformational learning to elicit enhanced team development and constructive organizational change.

Through interviews, journals, and leadership creeds, the participants were able to engage in reflective learning about their leadership styles. They were given an

opportunity to discover how they had influenced others and how their learning opportunities had affected them as emerging leaders. Finally, they revisited how their collegiate leadership development program had affected them as leaders within their organizations and communities.

Through a focus group, peer reviews, and member checking, the researcher minimized researcher bias. Triangulation also supported the findings' internal validity through the interviews, journals, and artifacts.

As these participants were given the opportunity to be in the study, they were able to go through their own transformational learning process to discover who they were as leaders, how they had contributed to their organizations and communities, and how they could support and mentor other emerging leaders. Reflective learning and transformational processes supported these women and may continue to do so as they further emerge and thrive as leaders.

Chapter IV: Findings

Preface

This chapter explores the analysis of the cases and presents the major themes that emerged based on the primary and secondary research questions. These case studies were developed through interviews, journals, artifacts, and a focus group. The six emerging millennial leaders who participated in this research study are profiled as an introduction to this chapter with pseudonyms that were developed from metaphors based on their descriptions of their respective leadership styles. The Butterfly, the Cheerleader, the Diplomat, the Guardian Angel, the Matriarch, and the Swan share many values, but also differ in their philosophy of leadership. An analysis of the primary and secondary research questions and the themes that emerged from them follows the descriptive summary of each of the six emerging leaders.

Overview of Emerging Leaders

The Butterfly

“Every challenge, every opportunity, every situation has been a seed for growth, helping me create a garden full of flowers that represent these experiences. Whenever I am presented with a situation that calls for my leadership, I am able to draw from this garden of knowledge and inspire others to find their own ‘flowers.’ A garden needs constant nurturing and will change over time as new flowers are added. Like a butterfly, a strong leader is one who can adapt to these changes and realizes that there is always room for metamorphosis and growth.”

The Butterfly (B/J/6)

The metaphor of the butterfly was suggested by the participant, who said, “Like a butterfly, a strong leader is one who can adapt” (B/J/6). The butterfly suggests transformation, the metamorphosis from caterpillar to butterfly, and hence adaptability, a value that the Butterfly prized. The butterfly thus serves as an icon of personal growth.

The Butterfly plunged into changing things, no matter how much commitment was required, rather than observing things in a passive or detached manner. She valued honesty and demanded this quality from others. She admired strength in a leader, viewing a true leader as akin to a force of nature.

“As long as you always understand and hold your values true to your heart, then you will be able to conquer or do anything.”

The Butterfly (B/I/8)

The emphasis that the Butterfly placed on strength was matched in her self-assessment as “a very strong personality” and as someone who “takes charge” and jumps in to get things done. “I get very frustrated with people who are not doing what they need to do, so I usually end up taking the lead and just doing it.” The problem was that, as she said, “I end up overwhelming myself and putting too much on my plate. But . . . if it doesn’t get done, then things start to fall through, and that is not good for anybody.” Her experience in New York was transformative. As she reflected, “After working with underprivileged youth in New York City, I developed an even stronger sense of advocacy and was inspired to become a community organizer to support others constructively” (B/J/I).

The Butterfly expected others to show strength of character as well by respecting her enough to tell her the unvarnished truth: “Even if you think it is going to hurt my feelings, I [would] rather hear it straight. I [would] rather not hear it sugar-coated. Because if you sugar-coat, I [might] think the situation is not as bad as it really is.” Although she valued honesty, she viewed honesty as no justification for tactlessness. As she explained, “I think [that] filtering yourself is fine, but at the same time, you need to realize when it is time to be honest” (B/I/3).

“A strong leader commits to a mission and works with others who have a shared vision. Strong leaders understand that they are nothing without the support of others who believe in their leadership.”

The Butterfly (B/J/6)

She reflected on what makes a leader: the source of a leader’s passion, what makes a leader excel, and key elements of a leader’s life story. As she observed,

Some would say that great leaders are born and that leadership qualities are innate and a force of nature. Others may believe that leadership qualities are learned as opportunities are given. Whatever one might believe, I feel that a true leader inspires change, commitment, and growth. (B/J/I)

When she turned her gaze inward, she pondered how she became a leader. In doing so, she used the metaphor of the garden, which in turn led to her characterization of the leader as a butterfly, the source of her designation as the Butterfly.

The Cheerleader

“There are many inspiring leadership styles, but I am like a cheerleader because I am the one [who] praises others and constantly cheers for them until they have accomplished their goals. I love to see people achieve their goals, and I value having been a stepping stone along their path to fulfilling their dreams.”

The Cheerleader (C/J/3)

This participant saw herself as a cheerleader, so that metaphor was taken from her own self-description, which embraced enthusiasm in helping others. The Cheerleader placed a premium on encouraging others and helping them to achieve their full potential. Unsurprisingly, the Cheerleader valued compassion and shared goals. In her view, the leader should be healthy and disciplined, demonstrating self-mastery and self-sacrifice before presuming to lead others. She held high expectations for both self and others,

demanding strict adherence to rules, while also believing in giving ample praise for achievements.

The Cheerleader reflected in her journal about how she had grown and how her leadership style had evolved. She saw this evolution as ongoing: “I am still defining my leadership style.” Her self-definition as a leader was as “a cheerleader who is enthusiastic and spirited.” She noted that she had not come across this definition of a leader, but insisted, “I really enjoy encouraging and motivating people to reach their goals. I am more like that person on the sidelines cheering for others to accomplish their ambitions” (C/I/1).

The Cheerleader identified several traits as crucial to effective leadership: compassion, discipline, self-sacrifice, and a focus upon shared goals. “Leadership is about being compassionate and working toward a global goal in the organization that you are leading.” Personal traits that reflect self-mastery are vital. Executing leadership “is about being disciplined and healthy mentally and physically. An undisciplined person does not have the capability of leading himself or herself. To add others to [an undisciplined leader’s] chaotic journey is a recipe for disaster.” Self-sacrifice is also a necessary quality in a leader. “Being a leader is about making sacrifices. Leaders certainly forgo time with their loved ones and personal time for themselves to move masses in the right direction” (C/J/1).

The Cheerleader believed that the sacrifices that a leader must make were worth making, at least in her own case as an educational leader. “I know that I am leading an important endeavor every day.” Her work was important, she believed: “I have to give proper direction to facilitate performance and growth” in an environment in which high

expectations are placed upon students. “Students are expected to flourish quickly in a setting where there are strict rules that have to be followed to complete assignments.” In this environment, a laissez-faire, permissive style of leadership would be inappropriate. “I have to be very firm and not allow nonsense. I am tough, and I have high expectations of the children and their parents.” The payoff is that both parents and children therefore “know where I am trying to get the children academically before the end of the year.”

The Cheerleader’s firmness was balanced by positive reinforcement:

I praise often for academic growth, maturity, kindness, and diligent efforts. I give constant positive reinforcement. When reinforced positively, students are more likely to repeat their positive actions and steer away from their mischievous conduct or from what is not acceptable in a classroom setting. (C/J/2)

The Cheerleader balanced firmness and praise. She demanded respect first and showed affection only after receiving it.

After I gain respect, then I can show affection. When children and adults know that there are high expectations for them, from a person [who] cares for them, respects them, and thinks highly of them, [then] they do everything possible to meet [those] expectations. They do not want to disappoint you because there is mutual respect, so they extend extra efforts to strive for success. (C/J/2)

She was considering becoming a leader in education as she pursued a master’s degree in educational leadership from Columbia University. However, she indicated, “I am soul searching about where I will go next in my life because I want to support the community, and I definitely see myself as a leader of an organization” (C/I/7).

The Diplomat

“I bring forth a diplomatic, consensus-building persona to the organizations and communities with which I collaborate. I am respectful of different points of view and make every effort to consider various sides of an issue. This I have learned through my own experiences and through the relationships I have built throughout the years with people from different cultures and ideological backgrounds. While I do not necessarily agree with certain perspectives, I exercise understanding and compromise when necessary.”

The Diplomat (D/J/3)

The Diplomat favored assertiveness and a strong work ethic, despite the stress that these could generate, but also placed an equal value on listening carefully to others and respecting them while building consensus. Communication was a central issue for the Diplomat. She did not see assertiveness and diplomacy as mutually exclusive. In part, this was because the Diplomat placed a premium on honesty, integrity, inclusiveness, respect, and effective communication. She embraced personal growth and sought out leadership positions in part for the intrinsic satisfactions that could be gained through taking on their challenges. The Diplomat believed that leadership could be learned and taught. She valued collaboration and community development. These values weighed more heavily than financial gain in her assessment.

Self-actualization seemed to be a key motivator for the Diplomat, who said, “I seek leadership positions for growth and development, . . . even when they provide no financial gain. I see them as benefiting me as a person and as opportunities to contribute to the community.” She cited as an example being “involved in . . . Amigas de las Americas” and similar organizations, even though “most people wonder why I would volunteer instead of taking on a lucrative assignment” (D/I/1).

The Diplomat listened to others and was guided by them in her efforts to make contributions to the community: “The leadership style I have adopted involves contributing significantly to the community, but at the same time to really seek and listen to the input of others and really use that feedback to accomplish goals.” She felt strongly about the value of dialogue and the importance of civic engagement. The Diplomat’s willingness to speak out on behalf of others seemed balanced by encouraging others to do the same. She expressed personal conviction and gave voice to those who have been silenced: “I have developed an ability to speak my mind without feeling timid because many people have strong opinions, but many are afraid to say what they think, and they depend on strong leaders to support them in overcoming obstacles and alleviating fears” (D/I/3).

Balance again emerged as a value in the interplay between assertiveness and diplomacy: “You can be diplomatic even when challenging certain situations.” The Diplomat was sorry to see people who were willing either to sacrifice assertiveness out of a misguided impulse to be diplomatic or to sacrifice diplomacy out of a misguided impulse to be assertive: “I have seen a lot of people stand aside and just accept unfairness because they are afraid to say something, or else they are negative in their approach to resolving issues and end up making matters worse.” Balance stems from careful consideration of a situation and the implications of various possible reactions. “I wish to be the type of person [who] will evaluate something, and if I am not in agreement with it and the situation is appropriate, I am going to make my opinion known.” The Diplomat mentioned the Abilene Complex as a cautionary tale about the dangers of failing to be straightforward due to a distorted view of diplomacy (D/I/3).

Key virtues to the Diplomat were honesty, integrity, and a work ethic. Given the Diplomat's emphasis on being forthright, it was not surprising that the Diplomat also found honesty to be a key virtue. "Honesty is also an important value, and I wish everyone would speak their mind." Consistent with this value is integrity. However, the participants' old-fashioned work ethic was cardinal in their value systems. The Diplomat said that it was important "to be productive in whatever you are doing because a strong work ethic sets a good example for others and reveals character." The lack of a work ethic and strong values in others was irksome to the Diplomat, along with lack of assertiveness and ineffective communication skills, whatever the cause. She said, "It frustrates me in group settings when I am working with people [who] are weak and are unable to serve others with a sense of conviction and strength" (D/I/4).

Communication skills were critical to leadership in the Diplomat's eyes. "Communication is so important, and people with poor communication skills can often hinder an organization." Communication skills, the Diplomat said, were important "in a variety of community and global forums when you have the opportunity to consider a variety of options to realize constructive change for the benefit of others" (D/I/4).

Communication skills rounded out the Diplomat's list of the qualities that the leader should possess: "I believe that positive leaders possess the following qualities: honesty, integrity, inclusiveness, respect, initiative, and effective communication" (D/C/1).

Although people usually think of the spoken word when they focus on communication, the Diplomat realized that actions also communicate values and affect others. "I believe that leaders possess the ability to persuade and influence others, some by words and some by their actions, but the best leaders possess both qualities" (D/C/1).

The Diplomat pondered the perennial question of whether a leader is born or made: “I believe that certain people are born with inherent leadership qualities, but others can learn how to become leaders through opportunity and social encouragement” (D/C/1). Whatever the origin of leadership skills, they are important, as are the moral values of the leader, because “leaders can influence others in positive or negative ways, and the type of leadership qualities exhibited depends on the values and beliefs of the individual” (D/C/1).

The Diplomat credited her parents with her leadership style and the values that inform it.

As an emerging leader, I contribute to organizational development and transformation in several ways. First and foremost, [I do so through] the beliefs and values that my parents taught me as a child that have been developed and tested over time, [which] ultimately influence my leadership capabilities. (D/J/2)

She wanted to continue learning multiple languages because she believed that communication

through a variety of languages across the world is important and allows you to relate better to others and to gain trust and respect in different communities. My dream is to work for the U.S. State Department in the Foreign Service because I see myself making an impact on the world, being an ambassador and fostering diplomatic relationships. (D/I/7)

The Guardian Angel

“To be a good leader, no matter what age, you have to be mature and wise. Being compassionate and understanding, [as well as] having a sincere passion to support others, are hallmarks of my leadership—like a guardian angel.”

The Guardian Angel (G/I/3)

The Guardian Angel was characterized by an awareness of the needs of others and of the community. Her self-image involved being a protector and spokesperson for her culture and for people in need. The Guardian Angel's background as an immigrant has led her to have empathy for those who must master English as a second language in their pursuit of educational opportunities. Compassion and understanding are therefore her core values. However, these values did not deflect from being aware of what needs to be done and showing strength and determination in pushing things through to completion to attain a goal. Her maturity and constant pursuit of knowledge helped her to guide others better.

The Guardian Angel highlighted respecting diversity as a facet of her leadership style: "My culture and my desire to support others from diverse cultures influence my leadership." This stemmed from her personal "experience of coming to this country and pursuing educational opportunities." She noted that this experience motivated her "to guide and support others who are experiencing similar challenges." For many immigrants and their children, the struggle in a new country and with an entirely different culture entails mastering English as a second language. "I deal with many children as well as their parents who are not yet adept in their second language." This is but one of many profound difficulties faced by those who are not yet securely situated in their new environment, and the Guardian Angel felt compassion for them and realized the extent of their challenges. "Being compassionate and understanding about the challenges that they experience are important. That is where my heart is, and others can sense that I am sensitive and that I am genuine about [the fact that] I have a desire to help others" (G/I/1).

The Guardian Angel executed leadership from a position of strength. “I have a very strong personality.” This is beneficial for overcoming inertia and accomplishing goals. However, “sometimes [this] can be intimidating to those who are placing obstacles in the paths of those I serve, [which] is something I am aware of because this can come across as aggressive when I am expressing ideas, when all I am trying to do is be fair.” Her communication style was direct and “straight to the point.” However, her goal was not to ride roughshod over others, but to persuade others to provide greater community support and to empower colleagues to achieve shared goals. “I am determined to move others forward as a community advocate who is strong when their voices need to be amplified.” Her sincerity and commitment were evident when she declared, “I am strong, and I pursue positive outcomes for those I serve. I do not hesitate to do whatever is necessary to advocate for members of the community” (G/I/1).

The Matriarch

“I practice my style of leadership in everything I do, from being a good example to my younger sisters to guiding and lending support to my family, friends, and colleagues like a matriarch.”

The Matriarch (M/J/1)

What distinguished the Matriarch was an emphasis upon values and morals, which should be reflected in honesty and integrity. The Matriarch stressed the importance of one’s family, its values, and one’s upbringing on an individual’s character and personality, along with other formative experiences, including education. The leader should have empathy for those who may not have been as fortunate in their family background or education, and this empathy manifests itself in patience and encouragement in leading others. The Matriarch prized loyalty, which was reflected in

both the obligation to present the interests of subordinates to management and the obligation to present the interests of management to subordinates.

The Matriarch posited that every individual's view of leadership would be influenced by personal circumstances: "how you [were] raised, including your family values, your morals, your education, and everything [else] combined throughout your life experiences" (M/I/1). She thought that it was important for leaders to remember their roots: "A lot of leaders forget where they started. . . . I think that to be a successful leader, you should never forget. . . . I started to forget" (M/I/6). Remembering helps instill compassion. "It is very important that we never forget where we come from" because remembering where one has come from can lead to empathy; "you realize that [other] people may be coming from somewhere worse" (M/I/6). As was also true with other participants, she showed sensitivity to the issue of diversity. As she said, "I believe [that leaders] should remain cognizant of the fact that followers come from all walks of life" (M/J/1).

The Matriarch ascribed her own self-identification as a leader to having been the oldest child in her family. She gravitated to leadership positions and noted, "My work experiences have mostly been in supervisory positions." A leader must lead "all the time because leadership is not periodic or seasonal." She thought of being a leader as a calling: "It is not something you choose to be. I think it is just something that beckons you" (M/I/1).

She prized patience, empathy, drive, loyalty, and leading by example in a leader. "A leader should have patience . . . so that you can guide, teach, encourage, and motivate an individual [who] doesn't necessarily have the same values." Patience entails

valuing diversity and respecting others' differences. "We are not all made up the same way." Therefore, empathy is important. So is drive. "You need drive. If you don't have the drive to get you where you need to be, then you don't have the tools and the ability to get [other people] where they want to be." A leader must also teach by example in guiding others because others "are watching your every move." In addition, "leaders need to realize the importance of loyalty" (M/I/9).

If a leader demonstrates dedication and loyalty to others, a sincere expression "that you really want to be there," along with a commitment to the mission—that "you really want this to happen and you really want to make changes," then others "eventually [will] follow you and . . . believe in you" (M/I/9). Others need to see that the leader shows commitment and self-sacrifice, a willingness to "go that extra mile" (M/I/9). The "loyalty and trust" of those who follow the leader "should never be taken for granted," and leaders "should never forget the fact that they are only as influential as the people they lead" (M/J/1).

Personal virtues that a leader should demonstrate include "honesty, loyalty, integrity, and authenticity." The Matriarch believed that she possessed these "crucial attributes" and shared them with others as a community leader. She felt proud of her own integrity and consistency as a corporate manager. However, she in no way claimed perfection in her approach to leadership. "My leadership style is an ongoing work in progress." She acknowledged how much motivation she drew from others in serving them as a leader: "I feel that my ability to lead thrives on those who follow me. I learn from them [with] every opportunity that comes my way" (M/J/1).

In reaching out to others, the Matriarch had cast a wide net. She was aware of the breadth of her influence as a leader throughout her organization:

My leadership position enables me to resolve and create awareness throughout the organization. . . . I play a dual role. I have the obligation to speak on behalf of our employees before management and the obligation to speak on behalf of the corporation and management [to employees]. I must maintain a neutral position and display no bias. However, I stand my ground once I have gathered enough information to make a determination. (M/J/1)

She realized that a leader should never lose sight of ultimate goals and the duty to empower others. She stated, “As I reflect on my leadership style and that of those I have learned from, I [have] come to realize that no matter what style any particular leaders may have displayed, their ultimate goal has been to empower and guide those who you entrust and stand by them to achieve a common goal” (M/J/5).

The Swan

“I knew early on that I had a gift to be an advocate for others, but did not know how to express myself with regard to leadership. My life has changed dramatically ever since, and my transformation as a leader has been like that of a swan.”

The Swan (S/J/1)

The Swan put the needs of others before the needs of self. Self-improvement was necessary for the Swan to serve as a role model to others in their own betterment, which should not merely be a means to the end of achieving personal goals. Authenticity, compassion, and humility were key values to the Swan. She stressed the importance of equality, respect for others, and passionate commitment to one’s goals.

Her dedication to serving others shone clearly through her comments. The Swan said that good leaders would “improve themselves so they can improve other people, not just for their own benefit. That is how I define myself, as a leader helping others” (S/I/1).

She seemed to believe that charisma would result from self-development, particularly the cultivation of virtue: “I see myself as a leader [whom] others can admire and connect to because of my growth as an emerging leader.” Her mission to serve extended to people of all ages. Key virtues in her mind were authenticity, humility, compassion, and respect: “I want to be a leader who is authentic and has a sense of humility, a compassionate human being [who] respects others and cares about the future of our society.” A leader should not only be compassionate, but also “passionate about what he or she strives for in life” (S/C/1). However, no amount of passion or commitment would ever justify bad manners or acting rudely out of zeal to achieve a goal, no matter how laudable the intention: “A leader should practice etiquette and know the time and place to speak their mind” (S/C/1).

The Swan was particularly concerned about people whose rights had been denied or who had not been treated fairly. She said, “I hope to support those [who] are struggling to achieve equality.” Her quest was to be a leader who would inspire others to help themselves and others. She said, “I want to make a difference by motivating others to strive for excellence” (S/I/9).

Her background showed how her own personal and professional goals had changed as she discovered a vocation for community organizing. Her original professional goal had been to enter the field of law, but she noted that she “decided instead to work with community organizations as an advocate for families” (S/I/9).

Her conception of leadership was infused with a sense of mission, a vision of a more just society, tied with the view of the leader as an inspirational figure to others. “Leadership isn’t about one person; it is about a collection of people. It is about building others to be their best. Leadership should be uplifting, motivating, and rewarding because of the contributions that we are making that support others” (S/I/9).

Research Questions

The primary research question was:

1. How do emerging leaders from a variety of organizations and community groups define and enact their leadership styles?

The first secondary research question was:

2. How do various life experiences and the actions of others influence emerging organizational and community leaders?

The second secondary research question was:

3. How do various learning opportunities affect emerging organizational and community leaders?

The third secondary research question was:

4. How is emergent organizational and community leadership fostered through a collegiate leadership development program?

Data Analysis

The data analysis stemmed from coding the data from the interviews, journals, artifacts, and focus group to create constructs and categories. The analysis involved looking for the connections and intricacies between the various data sources through triangulation to test the soundness of the emerging patterns. Three key themes emerged

for each primary or secondary research question. The findings cluster around each of the following 12 themes, which are delineated in Table 4.1 as follows on the next page:

Table 4.1: *The 12 Themes that Emerged from an Analysis of the Data*

Theme 1: *Embracing Differences*: These emerging leaders valued diversity and insisted upon greater inclusion and respect for others.

Theme 2: *Cultivating Relationships*: The participants valued teamwork, mentoring, and networking, built on respect and compassion.

Theme 3: *Fostering Collaboration*: Valuing others, embracing their views, and encouraging them to contribute were important to these emerging leaders.

Theme 4: *Overcoming Adversity*: Facing challenges, personal and professional, transformed these participants and forged stronger leadership.

Theme 5: *Pursuing Dreams*: Passion for their vision and perseverance propelled these emerging leaders, who engaged the heart, not just the mind.

Theme 6: *Becoming Pillars of Inspiration*: Charismatic leaders served as role models for these emerging leaders, who in turn sought to inspire others.

Theme 7: *Acquiring Knowledge*: The participants valued education and learning, as well as fostering personal and organizational knowledge.

Theme 8: *Engaging in Reflection*: Reflecting on experience, even failure, personally and organizationally, served these emerging leaders.

Theme 9: *Striving for Growth*: The participants mobilized all resources when facing crises and dilemmas; fear and resolve could accompany growth.

Theme 10: *Pursuing Civic Engagement*: Community service was important and fulfilling to these emerging leaders, who cared and wanted to give back.

Theme 11: *Building Capacity*: Building capacity involved empowering individuals and teams to transform organizations and society.

Theme 12: *Envisioning Millennial Contributions*: The ambidexterity, creativity, and vision of the emerging leaders highlighted their leadership.

Themes

Primary Research Question

The primary research question was: **1. How do emerging leaders from a variety of organizations and community groups define and enact their leadership styles?**

The efforts of these emerging leaders were driven by profound respect for others and were enhanced by strength in building networks. The themes of **embracing differences**, **cultivating relationships**, and **fostering collaboration** reflect how the participants act as leaders.

Theme 1: Embracing Differences

All of the participants had been exposed to rich cultural heterogeneity and embraced diversity due to having come to value it in their personal experiences. Each had been connected with individuals from other backgrounds, races, nationalities, religions, cultures, beliefs, and lifestyles. The participants appreciated these differences, even when they caused difficulties, rather than merely tolerating them. This diversity was an integral and treasured part of their lived experience, not a vague or abstract ideal or a value to which they paid only lip service. As they were millennial leaders, they had the capacity to help society become more inclusive because they embrace differences.

“Our generation accepts and respects different people. The reality is that we understand other cultures, we appreciate other religions, and we accept other lifestyles.”

The Cheerleader (C/F/14)

All of the participants had encountered varied cultural experiences and embraced diversity based on their personal upbringing and their intimate connection to a variety of individuals from other backgrounds. The Butterfly was exposed to extensive cultural

awareness and diversity training through the Teach for America program. “We had to find out about each other, and we had to find out what enabled us to work better with each other,” she said (B/I/5).

Additionally, the Butterfly belonged to a multicultural sorority that raised her awareness of the differences evident in diverse groups and how her involvement allowed her to understand others better:

We all came from different religions, backgrounds, and lifestyles. We did not think about our differences in a negative way, but as a strength overall. We had to develop an understanding of each other and to put ourselves in uncomfortable situations at times. Sometimes we had to overcome challenges. We had to work through the pain. (B/I/7)

“I believe leaders should put themselves in new and unfamiliar situations to understand the perspectives of other races, cultures, religions, backgrounds, and lifestyles better.”

The Butterfly (B/C/1)

The Matriarch learned about embracing differences through the collegiate leadership development program. “For the first time in my life, I was introduced to something other than my own culture when I met Africans, Asians, Colombians, Hondurans, Germans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and others,” said the Matriarch (M/I/6).

The Matriarch elaborated about her experience in this program and how it had expanded her personal views on diversity:

That experience taught me responsibility and how to appreciate the diversity of people that we have in this world because this was the first opportunity I had to work with people from other cultures. It was difficult for me because I had not

had that experience in my life, but I learned to appreciate all the good that everyone brings to this world. (M/F/5)

The Matriarch also expressed her involvement with teams and the importance of role models within the leadership development program. She characterized it as a “success”

to adapt to different personalities because everyone was so different. Being able to learn about team members and about their unique backgrounds and to truly respect them. This experience taught me to be adaptable and to provide guidance and to be guided by wonderful role models who provided differing perspectives. (M/F/11)

The Guardian Angel highlighted her mother as a role model who set an example for accepting others:

Leaders have to be open to many ideas instead of just focusing on their own style of leadership. I learned that from my mother. I think [that] she is a great leader. She has always been asking what others thought to make a situation better and making sure others feel comfortable with the decision made. (G/I/1)

“Leaders should believe in equality and treat others the way they want to be treated.”
The Swan (S/C/1)

The Swan also acknowledged that there are differences of perspective in organizations:

Knowing that it is all right to disagree because you have the opportunity to consider other perspectives. Realizing that I wouldn’t have seen a situation quite like that, but understanding that this lends an opportunity for us to learn and grow

based on our interactions with others. Acknowledging those differences and accepting the opportunity for learning and growth. (S/F/3)

The Swan emphasized how there are differences in the ways that individuals contribute within an organization:

We have to be flexible because each person learns at a different pace, and we are all different. . . . I have learned that we are all unique and that it is important that we acknowledge our differences and are open to alternative viewpoints.

(S/I/6)

“Leadership means respect for others, regardless of their age, ethnicity, beliefs, cultures, and educational or personal backgrounds.”

The Guardian Angel (G/C/1)

The Diplomat discussed how people tend to pair up with other people who are similar to themselves within an organization: “It is important to gain perspectives from a wide variety of people. People usually like to team up with others who share similar perspectives, and that is not conducive to including multiple perspectives, which could lead to creativity” (D/I/4). Through organizations and programs, the participants learned how to embrace others who were different from themselves and were able to learn from key role models.

“You can have leaders [who] are extremely active and others [who] are quiet, but still extremely effective, without being pompous or as visible. I think everybody has the potential to be a leader and just expresses it through different styles, depending on the situation.”

The Cheerleader (C/F/6)

The participants learned how to share their culture and bring new cultures into their lives as a part of their leadership style. The Butterfly commented about the value of sharing the richness of her culture with others and looked at other leaders for inspiration:

It was others' misunderstanding of who I was that made me appreciate differences in others. I realized that I could be angry that someone didn't understand me. Deciding instead to educate others about my culture is what drove me to learn about my ancestors. By learning about my ancestors, I took pride in the great leaders [who] came before me who have fought for equality and human rights.

(B/J/3)

The Diplomat was able to appreciate the diversity of her fiancé's culture, religion, and family:

My marriage to someone from Afghanistan is not something I would have imagined. He is so much like me in some ways, [yet] definitely not like me in others. Embracing a new family and a new culture and being understanding are important in fostering strong relationships. There are also differences in language and religion, which can present challenges, but you have to be open to different perspectives to understand where others are coming from. (D/I/5)

However, this accommodation of differences, although difficult, yields benefits.

The Guardian Angel noted, "Positive things come your way if you respect other people and their ideas. Just accept differences and respect others and as a result great things will happen" (G/I/3). The Diplomat reflected on how the environment can affect the possibility of a person becoming a leader. "I believe that the environment a leader grows up in and the stigmas attributed to the individual throughout childhood can either encourage or discourage leadership potential" (D/C/1).

The Diplomat felt that learning about others helped her to become a better leader, especially in regard to collaboration: "People of diverse backgrounds and views working

together results in understanding and respect that can lead to transformational learning.

This has made me a more sensitive and confident leader” (D/J/5). The participants felt as if they learned about their own cultures and were able to learn about other cultures as well. They mentored others about their cultures, which ultimately supported a mutual respect from all sides. This helped them to become better leaders.

“I believe that the best leaders are individuals who can easily relate to others, whether they come from similar circumstances or [have had] different experiences.”

The Diplomat (D/C/1)

The Guardian Angel commented about the U.S. society’s growing minority population and how this called for greater diversity in leadership:

The minority population is growing, and some people have difficulty accepting this. We are going to experience even greater diversity, which will create challenges. Having a minority president means that people are more accepting. We have to be strong because many people are fearful. I want to change the idea of minorities’ being lesser than. I am fighting that [idea] by going to schools and talking to children and telling them that they have a chance to succeed and that they need to be prepared to assume leadership roles. (G/I/7)

“I value different backgrounds, different cultures. That we embrace diversity is what I value most about our generation.”

The Swan (S/I/6)

Embracing differences was important to the participants because it had been an integral part of their experiences. They valued diversity and favored approaches to leadership that fostered inclusion of people who were diverse, not only in demographics (age, race, gender, ethnicity, etc.), but also in viewpoints, values, and perspectives. They

mentioned how they had benefited from exposures to diversity in such activities as participating in a multicultural sorority and in a leadership development program.

Theme 2: Cultivating Relationships

Establishing stronger relationships makes it possible for people to be honest, to express themselves openly, and to take risks. Through building relationships, compassion and collaboration can flourish. A leader can be more effective through cultivating relationships because then others are more willing to communicate honestly and openly about their weaknesses and fears, which can lead everyone to make decisions that are best for the entire organization. It is easier to give and take constructive criticism when trust exists. Teamwork flourishes only when those involved cultivate constructive relationships. Mentoring is possible only within the context of an established relationship. Networks are also based on relationships. Cultivating relationships requires respect and empathy.

“I believe leaders know, accept, and understand that they are only as strong as the people they lead, and therefore they must lead with compassion.”

The Butterfly (B/C/1)

The emerging leaders in this study enacted their leadership by supporting their communities through strengthening their networks. The Butterfly stressed the importance of building relationships and connections that are an asset to organizations and communities. She stated:

Fostering personal relationships was key to our success in the collegiate leadership development program. Because we became allies, we were not afraid to be honest. . . . Sometimes people try to separate work and their personal

lives, [yet] positive relationships can lead to a better understanding so that everyone can work better together. (B/I/7)

“We have to focus on what is before us as a cohesive team and not let personal obstructions keep us from what needs to be accomplished.”

The Matriarch (M/I/6)

The Matriarch recognized the importance of developing relationships that lead to networks of support: “The people [whom] I have met over the years have become part of a network that provides me with guidance. It is important that we value these networks” (M/I/10). The Matriarch noted the importance of building partnerships to support the community: “Connecting with others allowed us to create alliances and partnerships to strengthen our community. I am constantly establishing partnerships to support the community through a variety of resources” (M/F/9).

“Leadership means embracing and respecting other people’s ideas, thoughts, and dreams equally.”

The Guardian (G/C/1)

Communication, openness, and teamwork were crucial for the participants to build relationships within a group or program. The Diplomat expressed the importance of creating an environment that allowed for alternative viewpoints: “It is important to foster an environment [in which] everybody feels comfortable [about] speaking their mind instead of just being agreeable. Developing a comfortable environment to encourage alternative opinions is critical” (D/F/3).

“It is important to promote inclusivity by giving people the opportunity to express themselves.”

The Cheerleader (C/F/3)

Being open to learning and change requires understanding and openness. As the Cheerleader put it, “An enormous amount of understanding is required to be transformed

by our learning experiences. You do not have to adopt the views of others, but you have to understand their perspectives and to be open to alternative viewpoints” (C/J/1). The Swan concurred with this view of the importance of openness. The Swan thought that it was important to be open to other views:

Some people say and do things that are not necessarily best, [so] you must have courage to intervene. I have worked with groups that were not receptive to other opinions initially, and you have to help them realize that if they are going to support each other, they have to be open to other perspectives. It is important that we consider how others see situations, even if we have strong beliefs. We have to encourage others to be more open-minded. (S/F/3)

“I believe [that] leadership should remain cognizant of the fact that followers come from all walks of life. Loyalty and trust should never be taken for granted, and leaders should never forget that they are only as influential as the people they lead.”

The Matriarch (M/C/1)

The Butterfly expressed her belief in the value of communication and sharing to develop positive relationships in teams:

One of my fondest memories of the collegiate leadership development program is our conversations. I learned about collaboration. Together, we made a difference; we challenged each other to give more of ourselves in our mission of empowerment. We knew each other’s weaknesses and strengths. Because of the personal relationships and our unity as a team, we were able to make a difference on campus and in the community. (B/J/5)

The Matriarch stressed the importance of teamwork and sacrifice, as well as extending interpersonal connections beyond current limits:

I learned dedication and teamwork through the collegiate leadership development program. I learned about sacrifice and about caring. My entire life, I had focused on my family, yet it is important to develop other relationships, and every one of them has inspired me to go beyond my limits. (M/I/6)

“Leadership means compassion. You cannot be a good leader if you don’t feel for others.”

The Guardian Angel (G/C/1)

All participants stated a belief about how important trust was as a part of their personal connections and how vital it was to their leadership. The Butterfly noted the importance of building personal relationships and trust as part of developing teamwork: “If you do not feel comfortable and personal relationships are not developed, you will not have trust, and people will not express themselves. That is definitely a challenge for teams” (B/F/10).

The Matriarch emphasized the importance of communication and honesty to build capacity and trust when we are pursuing change: “If you are pursuing change, if you want people to be open, and if you want to build capacity and to foster collaboration, you have to be able to communicate honestly so that you build trust” (M/F/2).

“Leadership is about treating everyone equally and realizing that no one person is any better than anyone else.”

The Swan (S/I/5)

The Cheerleader shared a vision of leadership that is collaborative and based on trust: “I want to promote self-sufficiency and demand excellence. I want the people [who] work with me to know that I trust their judgment, but they also have to ask if they have doubts” (C/C/1).

The emerging leaders focused on being courageous and honest in supporting people to stand up for themselves and others. The Cheerleader argued that honesty and courage are crucial in leadership. She argued that people should not be intimidated by other people's opinions, but instead should "stand up for what is right. It is important not to be swayed one way or another because of what people say. Staying informed and knowing all sides of the issues help the leader stay focused" (C/C/1).

"A leader should be empathetic to understand those less fortunate."

The Swan (S/C/1)

The Guardian Angel stressed the importance of honesty and having the courage to take a stance in support of one's convictions. She spoke of honesty and the need to have the courage of one's convictions, to be comfortable with them in any environment: "If you don't feel comfortable, you are not going to speak up. Sometimes, you are afraid because others may put you down or you fear failure. A leader has to have the courage and passion" (G/F/3). The Butterfly noted the importance of integrity and leading by example: "Giving positive reinforcement while giving constructive criticism is important. You also have to be consistent because you are setting the pace [and] are seen as an authority" (B/F/4).

"I believe [that] leadership is authentic, humble, and giving, needing no title to [be] important. [True leaders] respect all members of society, no matter where they come from."

The Matriarch (M/C/1)

Being positive and demonstrating respect as a leader were significant to the participants. The Guardian Angel shared her insights regarding the importance of avoiding division and the negativity associated with it: "Leadership is not a power struggle or about who is in control. Leadership is not about envy; it is about feeling

pleased for others' success. Being insecure as a leader should not occur, or leadership is dysfunctional" (G/C/1).

"Leadership means understanding. Good leaders have to understand people's circumstances, lives, and situations to meet their needs."

The Guardian Angel (G/C/1)

The Guardian Angel underscored the importance of gaining respect by embracing others. Leaders "gain respect by respecting everyone's ideas. Addressing everyone politely is important. Just being respectful and requesting support in a positive manner make a difference" (G/F/4).

"A leader should be honest to gain the trust of others."

The Swan (S/C/1)

Reflection on their relationships with others illuminates a better understanding of the world. Cultivating gratitude for each other deepened the interpersonal connectedness. The Diplomat stated how she valued developing her relationships, something that she learned in the collegiate leadership development program: "These connections provide a foundation of support. In the program, we all expressed our feelings and realized that we were open to other perspectives. Our connections led us to a greater understanding" (D/I/5).

The Diplomat underscored the importance of showing gratitude by saying, "It is important for leaders to provide recognition, not [materially], but [by] praising others for their efforts. This recognition is worth millions because all people yearn for gratitude" (D/F/4).

"Some leaders expect to be placed on a pedestal because they view others as beneath them. Leadership is about realizing a sense of balance so that everyone is valued, regardless of hierarchy."

The Cheerleader (C/I/2)

Cultivating relationships was important to the participants for several reasons. It was integral to creating cohesive teams and functional support networks. However, it also had implications for personal growth and organizational achievement. Cultivating relationships facilitated trust and honesty, which in turn made it easier to take risks. This made it possible to push beyond limits to achieve more.

Theme 3: Fostering Collaboration

Organizations depend on teamwork. Collaboration is essential for effective teamwork. In general, both women and millennials highly value collaboration. Leaders can foster collaboration through recognizing the abilities and merits of others through positive feedback. Leaders can thereby make others realize that their contributions are valuable, which helps them feel a sense of belonging. This encourages team members to develop their abilities and to contribute more to shared endeavors. Collaboration is furthered when a leader has an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of other team members so that the leader can encourage others to develop the skills that they need. Leaders can foster collaboration through building a shared vision by communicating with others about goals and encouraging everyone to share responsibility for achieving them.

Through their experience of teamwork with other talented individuals, the participants came to value how work can be done collectively within a group. The Matriarch highlighted the importance of collaboration, teamwork, and shared leadership to fulfill organizational commitments: “I facilitate collaboration to develop unity to make sure that everyone can lead. I allow everyone to take the lead to encourage

accountability. This allows them to experience support; without team support, nothing can be accomplished” (M/J/2).

“I believe that leadership can be displayed and carried out individually, but the most effective type of leadership is inclusive, involving and encouraging partnerships and collaboration.”

The Diplomat (D/C/1)

The Swan highlighted the importance of shared contributions and the value of collaboration. She was pleased to learn about herself that she could work with many different kinds of people. She was pleased to learn how much everyone has to contribute. She noted, “I realize how a variety of organizations and community groups work together to accomplish initiatives. Everyone can make a difference, but success depends on collaboration” (S/J/1).

Both the Swan and the Butterfly recognized the value of networking with people in other organizations, as well as within the organization. The Swan noted, “You foster collaboration by getting to know others in various organizations by networking and by supporting them through various partnerships. Over time, you gain their trust” (S/F/1). The Butterfly proposed that team members are like “bridges across organizations and communities”:

I build partnerships by looking for the strengths of others and highlighting their contributions. The key is realizing what team members do best and constantly encouraging them. Leaders are only as strong as those they serve. One leader in the Teach for America program acknowledged that she was only as strong as the people who moved her organization forward. [All leaders] must realize that they are like bridges from their organizations to the community. (B/I/2)

“Collaboration is a key ingredient to any successful organization or thriving community. In my current leadership position, I strive to foster collaboration throughout our entire corporation, from the executive team to the front lines.”

The Matriarch (M/J/1)

Building on each other’s strengths and capitalizing on the abilities of everyone are crucial within a team environment. The Butterfly emphasized the importance of incorporating the talents of various team members, as was best for the particular situation: “We all have different talents. In the collegiate leadership development program, we drew on our experiences and talents. We were stronger when we recognized our weaknesses and strengths” (B/I/8).

“It is essential that I foster collaboration because it is the essence of my role as a leader to connect a global community to accomplish goals, whether we are planning an event or forming relationships.”

The Diplomat (D/I/1)

The Butterfly noted that members of a team can motivate one another to strive to achieve their greatest potential:

Just being part of a group of profound colleagues constantly challenged us. We had different talents and different ways of handling situations. We respected each other. We realized that we were all leaders. When one of us wanted to quit, we would energize each other. The challenges of the collegiate leadership development program made us the emerging leaders that we are today. (B/I/9)

The Cheerleader reflected on the importance of positive reinforcement. She commented upon her ability to support others to help them achieve more than they had ever expected: “Our success depends on positive reinforcement, something essential for a leader. [All people want] to hear that they are doing well. I believe in setting high expectations to motivate others” (C/I/2).

Giving team members the opportunity to play to their strengths and become the leader when needed will allow for shared responsibility to emerge. The Butterfly reflected on the importance of a leader's understanding of personal strengths. She also commented upon when a leader needs to assert a leadership role on a team:

It is important as a leader to know when your team needs your support. Strong teams have a shared vision and can share responsibility. As a leader, you need to know when to step back and when to be a follower as well. This is one of the key insights to realize as a leader. Sometimes you should lead, and sometimes you should follow those you have empowered. (B/I/3)

"I believe that leaders who collaborate with others maintain their authenticity, a sense of humility, and empathy for others."

The Diplomat (D/C/1)

Leaders need to remain humble and receive support from others, when needed. The Cheerleader highlighted the importance of humility and being realistic as a leader about one's personal limitations:

We must have excellent instincts to understand leadership. Leaders must have the ability to convey ideas and vision effectively. Staying humble is a must. Leaders must realize that they are not above anyone else or are not always more knowledgeable. We have to realize our limitations. Many leaders take on so many projects that they are not able to attend to all of them, or they crash because they become overwhelmed. (C/C/1)

"I believe that true leaders need to know how to follow, as well as how to lead. They know how to share responsibility and understand that they can benefit from the talent of others."

The Butterfly (B/C/1)

People within teams, groups, communities, and organizations want to be able to identify with each other and feel valued. The Guardian Angel highlighted the importance of creating a sense of belonging, appreciation, and respect in organizations: Everyone needs to feel that he or she belongs and has a sense of purpose. “Acting respectful is a key to building trust. [People need to know that] their ideas are valued. I always try to make [people] feel that they are appreciated” (G/I/3).

When working with a team, the leader can show respect for others through active listening so that the person who is speaking feels heard and valued. The Diplomat highlighted the importance of active listening in fostering collaboration and of working in groups: “Taking things on alone limits possibilities. Working in teams provides an opportunity to listen to others. Making sure that everyone is participating and making others feel that their ideas are being heard help to foster respect” (D/I/2).

Teams, organizations, and communities engage in decision making and often have to reach consensus. The Cheerleader highlighted the importance of decision making as a leader:

I strive to involve other team members in decision making, which shows strength in a leader. [All of the participants know] that what they think matters, and they respect that someone [else] involved them in making decisions. . . . It is important to use this [participatory] style. Others on the team have important ideas, and that is why they were brought on the team. (C/J/5)

The Diplomat explained the value of having diverse experiences from those on a team. This is why she had supported the involvement of many people in making decisions and accomplishing a goal.

Most of my experiences have required me to collaborate: in high school athletics, international experiences, employment opportunities, marriage, and two fellowships. These experiences taught me how to work with people of different cultures, religions, and ideologies. I have learned how to learn from others. I have also developed language skills in Spanish and Farsi. These experiences have influenced my desire to utilize a collaborative approach to leadership. (D/J/3)

The Diplomat stressed the importance of collaboration as a means of striving for consensus:

As a higher education professional, I constantly collaborate. My experiences and my current assignment in international affairs have prepared me for collaboration. It is important to form a unified front with whatever decisions you make as an organization. It is difficult for the organization if people are criticizing team decisions. Once consensus [has been achieved], you have to follow the organization unless it totally goes against your values. (D/J/4)

“I foster collaboration by considering the opinions of everybody in the group and trying to reach consensus.”

The Diplomat (D/F/1)

Conflict is inevitable when people are not willing to work together. The Swan highlighted the importance of overcoming conflict to foster greater collaboration:

We had to work with several nonprofit organizations, advocating for community clinics and improved public health. This was challenging. One administrator did not want to work with us because of a personality conflict. A good leader collaborates and does not turn others away because of personal issues. It is

unfortunate when the community suffers because some leaders focus on negativity. None of us can work in isolation. (S/I/1)

The Cheerleader highlighted the importance of establishing connections and the difficulty that can arise when people are not flexible:

We constantly provide encouragement because it takes collaboration to deal with people in our organization. It is difficult when people do not collaborate, when they are not flexible. I am always establishing connections by reaching out into the community to work with parents if they need support for their children or calling on others in leadership positions to seek information about healthcare or for assistance with food. Collaboration is essential to leadership. (C/I/1)

“I have been transformed as a person by collaborating with a variety of people in various organizations, and I have become more community-oriented. I strongly believe in community building and advocacy.”

The Guardian Angel (G/J/6)

Critical reflection is another way to learn and to recognize how to foster collaborative relationships. The Swan highlighted the importance of reflection and stepping away from difficult situations to regain perspective and strength:

Sometimes challenges outnumber successes. Stubbornness, selfishness, and greed can challenge any organization. . . . Those challenges stifle us . . . and sometimes we have to step away from it all. It is valuable to take time to reflect.

We have to understand the consequences of our actions. (S/I/7)

Creativity can emerge by collaborating with teams and organizations. The Swan highlighted the importance of creativity when working with community organizers:

My leadership role allows me to work with community organizers. Initially, we focused on building the community. The partnerships we established made our organization stronger. Our work became more of a passion than a job because everyone realized that we were making a difference, and everyone was proud of the organizational mission. We worked with the community to create a vision.

(S/I/7)

The Diplomat also discussed the value of creativity: “I encourage everyone to participate in collaborative efforts because this allows creativity to emerge. My experience with teams and group activities has helped me to develop these skills” (D/I/3).

“I am totally open to new ideas when we all get together to share various perspectives. Individually, we may each look like a triangle or a square or a pentagon; we are all different geometric shapes. Together, we create a new form altogether because we are an amalgamation of everyone and everything around us.”

The Cheerleader (C/I/5)

Fostering collaboration requires leaders to make realistic assessments of the strengths and weaknesses of team members, while making sure to provide positive feedback and recognition to others. Sometimes, fostering collaboration also requires active listening and overcoming conflict.

Secondary Research Questions

An exploration of the three secondary research questions follows. The first secondary research question was: **2. How do various life experiences and the actions of others influence emerging organizational and community leaders?** These leaders tapped into their inner strength and emulated role models. They had overcome a variety of challenges to pursue their aspirations and were an inspiration to others. The themes of

overcoming adversity, pursuing dreams, and becoming pillars of inspiration

characterized their responses to their experiences.

Theme 4: Overcoming Adversity

The participants had faced various challenges. Some were transformative, such as being raised by a single mother, being a first-generation college student, working with underprivileged students, getting entangled in power struggles, changing jobs, and immigrating to this country. The participants also learned from role models who had overcome various obstacles, including developing cancer, suffering from domestic abuse, dealing with divorce, and facing language barriers and discrimination. Through personal or secondhand experiences in overcoming adversity, the participants became more effective leaders. They learned from facing challenges how to persevere and remain strong in the face of adversity and how to put fears aside when pursuing goals. These challenges also taught them to value their support networks, including family and friends, as well as the value of mentors and role models. Difficulties helped them to realize the importance of relying on a network of support to overcome adversity.

The Butterfly's mother overcame her own adversity, thereby becoming the pillar of strength for the Butterfly. Her mother served as her role model, support system, and inspiration. The Butterfly reflected on her upbringing:

I have had to overcome many challenges, [including] being raised by a single parent. My mother struggled with her marriage. My father had abused my mother. He would come home late at night, drunk and full of anger, and he would abuse my mother. She tried to leave him many times. We spent the early part of my life in and out of battered women's shelters. When she finally left him, she

promised that she would never turn back, and she didn't. She stands in my life as a rock of strength. Being raised by a single parent has helped me to find that strength. She has inspired me because she has been through abusive relationships, through losing her children, and through breast cancer. The obstacles seem endless. She has made me who I am today. (B/J/1)

The power of a positive role model in learning how to overcome adversity was shown in the Butterfly's case. She valued the lessons that she learned early in life from her mother:

I learned a lot from my mother, who taught me to stand up for myself. She taught me to be a kind person. My mother taught me respect for myself, for others, and for life. I saw my mother struggle as a single parent. My mother tells people that I am her rock. My mom's suffering made me into the strong person I am today.

Through watching her, I learned how to survive. (B/J/1)

"I have benefited from the insights of others when facing adversity. I have come to realize the value of different perspectives when dealing with challenges."

The Diplomat (D/I/5)

Like the Butterfly, the Cheerleader had to seek additional support after her parents divorced and she no longer had a father figure present in her life. The Cheerleader reflected upon how this divorce affected her life:

Key moments in my development were when my parents divorced, when I was going to join the Marines, and the collegiate leadership development program. I had been in ROTC and enjoyed the military training and the structure in my life, but when my parents divorced, I was not able to join the Marines because I needed to support my family. The absence of my father affected me. I didn't know what to do with my life. In college, I started seeing the world through other people,

books, and programs. When you face obstacles in your life, you can either break or become stronger. I was very blessed with a strong circle of friends and a strong mother. (C/I/4)

“The importance of being passionate about your aspirations and overcoming obstacles through perseverance really stays with me.”

The Guardian Angel (G/I/3)

The participants felt as though they had to have empathy and actually put themselves in other people’s shoes to be able to understand them better. The Cheerleader stated, “You have to put yourself in other people’s positions, which is not something I have done all of my life. You have to put yourself in other people’s places to understand what they are going through” (C/I/1).

The Matriarch realized the importance of empathy when she went to a family gathering. She reflected:

A recent birthday party for my aunt’s granddaughter took me back. You forget that 10 people live in a home, that people make the minimum wage, that buying a pair of shoes means the world to someone. You have to remain humble to be a good leader. (M/I/6)

“I still face challenges in my life, but they are the reasons that I have become such a strong and persistent human being. I am accustomed to overcoming obstacles, and I have learned to use them as a source of motivation to continue succeeding in life.”

The Guardian Angel (G/J/2)

These emerging leaders were examples for others and were able to have a great impact in many people’s lives. Through their support of others, they strengthened their ability to overcome their own adversity by leading the way for others. The Matriarch remembered:

I try to be a good example for my sisters, while having to overcome adversity at times. My father is an alcoholic. We have been through hard times. I always have to display strength. [I was] getting good grades while maintaining a home, keeping positive, and teaching others that hard work is the key to success. (M/I/1)

The Butterfly discussed a time when she was able to make a difference in other students' lives by inspiring them to pursue their college education:

My greatest fear about Teach for America was not knowing what to expect, but spending two years contributing to others changed me. To go into the classroom and make a difference in children's lives was inspiring, and [I hope that] some of them will become tomorrow's leaders. I hoped to be in the classroom to help students realize the importance of a college education. Most of the students weren't serious about education. Being able to foster a passion for learning within youth is a major contribution. I was able to motivate them to raise their expectations and to set higher goals. (B/I/10)

“Knowing that you are helping others overcome obstacles and persevere is encouraging when others need you and you are able to uplift them through compassionate leadership. Being a good leader is to value people and to support them along their journey.”

The Cheerleader (C/I/3)

The Guardian Angel was able to support others because she could relate to them and their experiences. She remembered:

I didn't want to live the kind of life my parents lived. They still struggle with the language, yet my parents brought us to this country to succeed. Their courage has changed my entire way of thinking. I had to fight for the opportunity to go to college, a challenge because we were economically disadvantaged and

undocumented in this country. My high school counselors told me to give up. They told me that I could not apply to college because I did not have a Social Security number. I ended up obtaining a degree. This was a struggle that made me realize that I had to be in a position to help other people. (G/I/3)

The Guardian Angel seems to have been typical of these emerging leaders in her attitude of “if given lemons, make lemonade.” Like the other participants, she showed no tinge of self-pity in recounting the hardships that she had faced. Instead, she showed gratitude for the support that she received from others in difficult times and for the lessons that she gleaned from these experiences. She was determined to help others, just as she had been helped.

Although I have gone through many struggles, I consider myself extremely fortunate with family and friends, the opportunity to graduate from college and to be in a leadership role that allows me to support the community. I have touched children’s lives by giving students the opportunity to attend after-school programs, offering a place to express themselves and enhance their social skills and offering their parents classes on family, education, and community issues. I understand what the families are going through. I am passionate about my community work. (G/F/5)

“I discovered my passion when I became involved in community service. I was blessed to work with so many community organizations and to support so many people who were grateful for our support. Many of them were searching for inspiration while facing major challenges.”

The Swan (S/I/4)

The Guardian Angel wanted to support others, as she had been supported, and create a positive environment for them:

I had a difficult time changing jobs recently after leaving another nonprofit organization. I had a great boss, but there was another person who was taking advantage of power, so there was a power struggle. Her power struggle forced many great employees out of their positions. I was forced to leave my position. I don't want people around me to be treated that way. I avoid putting people down. I try to avoid hurting others. (G/I/2)

Each of the emerging leaders felt as if there were sacrifices made for them that defined who they had become. The Butterfly discussed her struggle with her family's belief system regarding college:

Being a first-generation college student has also defined me, although in some ways it has made me the black sheep of the family because some members of my family have teased me because I have a college education. Making it through college and participating in a collegiate leadership development program have been major parts of my being who I am today. Being around strong leaders has inspired me because of the strength they possess, and just seeing that strength and their passion is defining for me as a leader. (B/I/4)

"It is difficult at times. Sometimes, you just want to run away, but something inside just doesn't let me. Sometimes, you just have to rely on your inner strength to keep you moving forward."

The Matriarch (M/I/3)

The Guardian Angel's family took a risk to come to the United States, but wanted their daughter to have an education and an experience that they had never had. She shared her feelings about her family and how they provided her with opportunities through their own sacrifices:

Coming to this country was a huge risk for my family. Immigrating and experiencing social injustice were hard. As a teenager, going to school and being an immigrant and female were challenging. My parents were wonderful role models through their strength and their support. I almost gave up because it was difficult to overcome the language barrier, discrimination, lack of opportunities for immigrants, and stereotypes. I could not understand why my parents were leaving our home, family, and jobs to live in this country. My parents became accustomed to the mistreatment, humiliation, and embarrassment to give their children greater opportunities. (G/J/1)

“I believe that leaders know how to overcome adversity. Leaders understand that they must be strong to overcome obstacles.”

The Butterfly (B/C/1)

The Guardian Angel felt as though she could share her strength with others to support them in achieving their dreams and the pursuit of their education. She reflected:

Working with immigrant families has not been easy. Sometimes, I feel like I am not doing enough or that what I am doing is not working. I struggle because immigrants have given up their dreams because of the discrimination they face. They have learned to accept being treated unfairly. These communities lack knowledge about their rights. We need to teach immigrants about their rights and to teach their children that education is the only way out. (G/J/4)

“Leaders should have the strength to endure challenges because they will only make them stronger.”

The Swan (S/C/1)

These emerging leaders knew firsthand the pain of adversity, yet they did not succumb to self-pity or allow hardship to immobilize them. Some had faced childhood

hardships of poverty, language barriers, or their parents' divorcing. Some had faced a parent's alcoholism or severe health problems. They had also faced such challenges as being a first-generation college student or suffering workplace conflict. All of these difficulties strengthened their resolve to persevere. They also believed that these experiences had made them more compassionate and understanding advocates for others who faced obstacles and difficulties, so their conviction was that overcoming adversity had made them stronger leaders.

Theme 5: Pursuing Dreams

Realizing one's dreams requires passion and perseverance. Dreams engage the heart, as well as the mind. For a team, pursuing dreams requires a shared vision. For a leader, getting others to pursue their dreams requires communicating effectively and empathetically. The leader can help others aspire to achieve more, perhaps by serving as an inspirational role model. To inspire others, the leader must be passionate about the mission and dreams of an organization or a community.

“Leaders should be passionate about what they want to accomplish; with no passion, there is nothing to strive for or dreams to pursue.”

The Swan (S/C/1)

The Butterfly commented upon her passion for dance and her desire to pursue dance after completing her assignment with Teach for America. “Having passion for something is going to push you forward. People who have a passion for something and don't let it go tend to fulfill their dreams. People who are relentless and do not give up on their dreams regardless” (B/I/2).

Through passion and perseverance, the leader can help to instill a vision in others. The Butterfly seemed wistful about not having experienced the passion and vision shared

by people who struggled for civil rights in the 1960s: “I wish I had grown up during the times of civil rights movements so that I could be right there to understand what people were experiencing and how that is different or similar to situations right now” (B/I/2). She admired Rosa Parks and the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Butterfly noted their perseverance, as well as their passion, and she seemed to recognize that perseverance was as important as passion. Just as both were necessary for the success of the civil rights movement, both are still needed today in the face of obstacles to progress. The Butterfly commented, “You read about all these passionate leaders who reach a point of frustration because of challenges, [yet] they don’t give up. Instead, they convert their frustration into enthusiasm, take action, and change the world” (B/I/2).

“Leadership means so many great things, but without passion, we will never realize our dreams.”

The Guardian Angel (G/C/1)

Collaboration is a cornerstone for achieving dreams, so the leader must “feel comfortable with different people.” As the Butterfly put it, “You have to have the same mission, the same goals, and the same end result [in mind].” If everyone shares the passion, then “together, you are able to build that end result or that end goal because of that shared vision” (B/I/2). Just as the civil rights movement brought together people from many different backgrounds to achieve common goals, so too, today’s visionary leaders also work with “strong leaders from various cultures and backgrounds;” the Butterfly noted the diversity of the leaders who had influenced her own leadership (B/I/2).

Overcoming obstacles was another facet of pursuing dreams. The Butterfly cited the example of a lawyer she met in New York who had come from the Dominican Republic, but had never gone to school until his arrival in the U.S., when he entered the

fifth grade. His example was inspiring because his initial educational deficiencies did not prevent him from becoming a lawyer. She said, “I encourage youth to realize that it is possible for them to fulfill their dreams” (B/I/5).

The Matriarch noted how empowered she had felt by others’ placing their trust in her:

Education administrators throughout my schooling and the parents of the friends all depend on me. With the respect and trust I earned, I became more confident and passionate, not only because it felt good, but also because I knew that it was the right thing. (M/J/2)

An implicit point in the Matriarch’s statement is that although leaders give a lot to others and do a lot for others, leaders also gain a lot in return. Leaders who are in balance with the give and the take of leadership need not run on empty. Just as leaders should strive to inspire others, they should also be open to receiving inspiration. As the Matriarch noted, “We must always be open and receptive to various possibilities as we pursue opportunities that may lead us to our ultimate dreams” (M/F/10). Leaders who are in tune with themselves, who have a sense of vocation and are true to it, will get recharged as they pursue their dreams.

“Good leaders work with their hearts, as much as with their minds. You have to feel, live, and enjoy your vocation to become a good leader.”

The Guardian Angel (G/C/1)

In pursuing dreams, the participants took guidance from the visionary leaders of the civil rights movement, among other role models. These emerging leaders realized the importance of having a clear vision and summoning effective communication skills to

convey it to others. Above all, they realized that pursuing dreams required passion and perseverance.

Theme 6: Becoming Pillars of Inspiration

Certain leaders are universally recognized as charismatic and inspirational. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., is one outstanding example. He, in turn, was inspired by the nonviolent resistance movement led by Mohandas Gandhi in India, which succeeded in overthrowing British colonial rule in the Indian subcontinent. What these and other inspirational leaders have had in common was a clear focus on their ultimate goal, no matter how difficult it might be to achieve it. They have had strength and perseverance, and they have elicited perseverance in others through instilling hope and motivation in them.

“Great leaders are pillars of inspiration because they genuinely care about others and address important issues for the betterment of society. . . . I believe that leaders should speak out against injustice, even if it conflicts with the opinion of the majority.”

The Diplomat (D/I/3, D/C/1)

Participants ascribed various traits to inspirational leaders, including compassion, respect, and engagement. A vision of social justice and betterment of the human condition, participants felt, set apart the truly exceptional leader. “It is the leader [who] is authentic and moral and contributes to society by supporting those most in need [who] is inspirational to me as a leader,” the Swan concluded (S/I/3). Inspirational leaders work well with other people from various backgrounds. “Great leaders are personable. They are able to make a connection with others,” the Butterfly noted (B/F/7). Inspirational leaders are humble; paradoxically, they are also followers: “As a leader, you are still a

follower” (S/F/7). Another paradox is that poor leaders can inspire others through a negative example of how to become effective leaders.

A particular quality of leaders admired by the Matriarch was their ability to see the best in people. This trait seemed to involve both recognition of others’ strengths and a charitable assessment of others. As she put it, “I look up to leaders who are compassionate. I want to be able see the good in everybody. I was taught to be cautious, but I want to embrace the good that people have to offer” (M/F/7).

“I believe that great leaders inspire others to join them in their leadership endeavors. To do this, a leader must hold certain qualities that [are conveyed] to others just by being in their presence.”

The Butterfly (B/C/1)

It is not only looking charitably upon others that sets the inspirational leader apart, but also observing courtesy and the rules of etiquette to ensure treating others with respect. As the Swan observed, “Leaders need to practice good etiquette. Most of all, you need to have ethical and moral standards. Some leaders always carry themselves well and always speak their minds because they have courage and wisdom” (S/F/13).

“I believe that true leaders lead by example. Their leadership is exerted in every action, word, and project in which they are involved. Great leaders are often humble and hold true to their values.”

The Butterfly (B/C/1)

Inspirational leaders are role models. The Swan noted, “It is important to have role models who guide you through difficult and challenging times” (M/I/3). They set an example. The Matriarch felt that certain leaders had helped shape her individual leadership style. Inspirational leaders take a strong stance regarding their values, speaking out against injustice, even if this involves going against majority opinion and entrenched interests. They take responsibility for their actions. They recognize the power

that they have over others. This includes the ability to motivate others to initiate action or to refrain from acting through the emotional power of their presence or charisma.

Inspirational leaders can stir the emotions of others to rally against injustice or calm those emotions, forestalling mob violence when outrage is at a fever pitch.

The Butterfly was struck by Martin Luther King's ability to instill patience in his followers that was apparent in the video *Teaching Colors*. King was in his family's new house. A crowd had gathered, and tempers were flaring. King cited Scripture: "The Lord says to be still and wait." As the Butterfly commented about King's presence of mind: "He knew that violence was not the solution. I thought that it was amazing of him to have that insight at that moment" (B/I/3). She characterized King's leadership style and his message of hope as "mesmerizing." She found it inspirational even to walk around Washington, DC, "the scene of marches that raised concerns about many inequalities in our world," and the spot where King gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech:

As I was walking around our nation's capital, I was filled with energy. I walked to the Lincoln Memorial and sat on the steps. On those steps, Martin Luther King, Jr., gave his "I Have a Dream" speech. I felt chills as I pictured the Washington Memorial filled with people who had the same dream. This experience made me realize the impact that a great leader can have. I have looked for ways to become a better leader ever since. (B/J/3)

"I believe that leadership begins with any person who sets an example for others every day without having to bribe, persuade, or obligate others to follow suit."

The Matriarch (M/C/1)

The Butterfly said that she wished to emulate King and other inspirational leaders. "I want to be a leader who makes a difference," she said; she wanted to inspire others, as

they had. “I do not yet know in what respect or in what capacity I will serve over the years, but I know that I will continue to be a leader, whether as a community organizer or as a strong businesswoman” (B/I/10). This belief in inspirational leadership entails great optimism in the face of injustice and discouragement; it involves the steadfast conviction that things can be improved.

*“Leadership means being a positive role model for our future leaders, our children.”
The Guardian Angel (G/C/1)*

Sometimes, leaders inspire others through empowering them to assume leadership alongside them. One of the participants noted that people become leaders because others recognize their leadership abilities and encourage them to become leaders. As the Butterfly observed, “We all knew we were leaders because we were given encouragement. Because someone told us that we were leaders, we believed in the possibilities, and we are now serving as leaders” (B/F/12).

Several of the participants gained inspiration through formal programs: summer academic bridge programs and collegiate leadership development programs. Peer groups, not just individual leaders in positions of authority, can function as inspirational leaders. “Sometimes the most impressive leaders in our communities hold no formal leadership positions, yet they are the most influential and serve as an inspiration to everyone,” the Guardian Angel noted (G/F/7). The Swan also noted that many of those who had inspired her leadership style were not in formal leadership positions: “I feel that I bring a leadership style that I have learned from many individuals, such as my parents, grandparents, professors, supervisors, community members, and people from various organizations” (S/J/1). As she explained,

I have a unique style because I have discovered my leadership abilities. Everyone contributes in our society in [his or her] own unique way. A leader can be anyone from a psychologist to a fitness trainer. Leaders' success is measured by how they help others. Someone does not have to carry a title to be leader. (S/C/1)

The Butterfly stated that when she entered college through a summer bridge program, other students and leaders had been inspirational to her and served as role models. Their passion and commitment inspired the Butterfly: "I remember meeting those higher education leaders and realized that one day, I wanted to be an advocate for higher education" (B/J/4). Passion and commitment were also qualities of leaders that inspired the Matriarch (M/F/4). Further, passion was something that the Cheerleader cited as a significant quality of the leaders she regarded as significant influences for her.

"Passionate leadership is inspiring, and emulating strong leaders is uplifting."

The Cheerleader (C/I/3)

The Matriarch noted the self-discovery afforded to her through her participation in a collegiate leadership development program (M/J/3). The Guardian Angel also cited how valuable her participation in a collegiate leadership development program had been to her in recognizing how great leaders serve as mentors. She elaborated:

Seeing great leaders treat everyone as an equal was inspiring. Everybody was treated as if they were important. This made me think about leadership. I already knew that I was not going to be curtailed and that I had to do something important. Having role models and being exposed to ideas motivated me. You can be a leader regardless of gender or background. Being involved in community

service made me realize that you can make a difference. Role models make a difference. (G/I/6)

The Swan also emphasized the importance of her participation in the collegiate leadership development program. The role models in that program, she said, “taught me how to work effectively with others” because “they worked extremely well with different groups and different people throughout the campus and community. They have the respect of the others and work collaboratively, and I see them as inspiring leaders because they not only help others grow into productive individuals, but they also constantly strive for excellence themselves” (S/J/1).

Charismatic and inspirational leaders serve as positive role models, see the best in people, and lead by example. They recognize others’ potential as leaders and encourage them to become leaders in their own right. However, bad leaders can teach by negative example what leaders should not do. As the Cheerleader noted:

Having really bad leaders has had a strong influence on the way I lead because I know what they have done to an organization or what they have done to certain individuals. I have seen failures in leadership positions, and that has formed me. I look at my parents, my friends, my bosses, and my teachers. Seeing what works for them and doing what they are doing [right] has really good results. (C/I/3)

The Cheerleader therefore concluded that learning from the mistakes of leaders with whom she had worked was just as important as taking the best approaches from those whose leadership she regarded as successful. “I have seen awesome leaders, and I have seen horrible leaders. It is a lesson for me not to repeat the negative examples, but for my leadership style to be a reflection of all the positive role models” (C/F/6).

Part of leadership is stepping up to the plate and taking the mantle of leadership. As the Cheerleader put it, “Being a leader is knowing you are a leader and not being afraid of recognizing it.” This entails accepting all the baggage that accompanies serving in a leadership position: “When you are in a leadership position, you receive it all: those who look up to you, those who disagree, accountability to a higher leader and choices that affect the lives of others. . . . What is magical about great leaders is that they know how to combine it all” (C/J/2, 5).

“In life, there is one inevitable truth: with great power comes great responsibility.”
The Cheerleader (C/J/2)

The emerging leaders who participated in this study aspired to become pillars of inspiration, like the past leaders who championed social justice and improved the human condition in their societies, such as the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Mohandas Gandhi. The participants wished to make a difference through their leadership in service to others. They had a strong ideal of what a leader could or should be, including treating others with respect and courtesy and helping others to develop their latent leadership capacity through encouraging them to step up to the plate and assume positions of leadership.

The second secondary research question was: **3. How do various learning opportunities affect emerging organizational and community leaders?** The learning opportunities of the participants led them to ongoing personal transformation. The themes of **acquiring knowledge, engaging in reflection, and striving for growth** described their inner journey.

Theme 7: Acquiring Knowledge

Sometimes, acquiring knowledge requires determination and perseverance. Completing a degree program certainly necessitates both. Leaders can encourage others to see the value in such perseverance. For some, acquiring knowledge involves overcoming a language barrier through mastering a second language. Some knowledge and leadership abilities can be acquired only by going through particular experiences. One participant noted that a leader never stops learning. Leaders gain knowledge to impart it to others.

Validation was an important theme for these participants as they discussed acquiring knowledge. Validation can come in the form of recognition from others through positive reinforcement, as occurs, for example, through the phenomenon of the Pygmalion Principle (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). The Pygmalion Principle constitutes validation in advance: If teachers believe that students will be successful, those students will achieve more. This is a type of self-fulfilling prophecy. People with low self-image and limited hopes tend to achieve modest outcomes, while those who view themselves and their prospects more favorably are more likely to succeed (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1992). Sherman (1980) believed that people tend to live up to predictions when they are cast responsibly and optimistically. Leaders need to realize “that our perceptions create our reality,” so it is important to be careful not to underestimate the potential for others to rise to expectations (Powley et al., 2001).

Much of the knowledge of these emerging leaders was gained through their life experiences. The Butterfly discussed a time in which she dealt with the challenge of coming from a Spanish-speaking house. The Butterfly reflected:

Even as a child, I was determined. I went to Mexico when I was four years old and [felt frustrated by] not being able to understand my cousins. My mother's memories of oppression had [caused her to shy] away from teaching me a second language. [While she was] growing up, my mother was punished if she spoke Spanish. She was terrified and never taught me Spanish. I begged my mom to teach me Spanish. I became fluent.

I consider knowing Spanish one of my greatest gifts. [When I was] in first grade, a survey was sent home that asked whether the student spoke any other languages. My mother marked *yes*, and I took the paper to school. I was placed in a program for struggling readers. (B/J/2)

"I believe that learning can be transformational, and knowledge strengthens our leadership potential."

The Diplomat (D/J/4)

The Matriarch felt that she learned from her life experiences because they provided her with leadership opportunities in which she was able to further develop these skills. She stated:

Certain characteristics can be developed. People embrace those qualities and expand that foundation, or they ignore these blessings and shy away from leadership opportunities because they just want to exist without the responsibility. I also see people who aspire to leadership and have to work extremely hard to develop leadership skills. (M/F/6)

The Guardian Angel felt that she was provided with opportunities as well. She commented, "Maybe some of us are born with greater leadership potential, but I also think that life experiences and the learning opportunities you are provided are critical

because some people are more fortunate than others. Everybody's situation is different”
(G/F/6).

Through life experiences, the Butterfly was a different person and a better leader.
She reflected:

It all goes back to life experiences. From the time I entered college to now, I
[have been] a totally different person. Going through learning experiences has
taught me to become a better leader. You are born with certain characteristics and
are given various opportunities that foster leadership skills. (B/F/6)

Education was very important to these participants in acquiring their knowledge
as leaders. The Diplomat established a higher level of self-assurance in who she was as a
leader. She concluded, “Just gaining knowledge and insights through education gives you
a sense of confidence. I contribute to my organization with a greater sense of confidence
that is enhanced because of the knowledge that I have acquired in higher education”
(D/I/4).

“Knowledge is important to minimize failure and to increase the chances for success.”
The Guardian Angel (G/F/11)

While in college, the Swan received support from her instructors and through her
exposure to many points of view, new ideas, and new theories. She reflected:

Attending college and acquiring knowledge opened my eyes to many
opportunities. There are many points of view worthy of consideration. I wanted
to keep in touch with my culture and chose Spanish as my second major. I met
many professors I looked up to, and this taught me that leaders vary and are not
necessarily CEOs or those with grand titles. One leader for me was a professor, a

writer [who] opened me to world history. My professor believed in keeping culture alive. Leaders are not just those with advanced education and major accomplishments, but also those next to us who are learning and supporting others day after day. (S/J/3)

The biggest decision of the Butterfly's life was to go to college. Going to college has affected her as a leader. She admitted:

I had never thought about going to college until my senior year in high school. I applied to various universities and for scholarships. A recruiter came to my high school and sparked my interest in higher education. I knew that this was going to be one of the biggest decisions in my life. (B/J/4)

For the Swan, her education helped her to create a network and a feeling of support that she was not alone. The Swan noted:

Being part of the collegiate leadership development program helped me to realize that I was not alone. When I was accepted into college after [having been] rejected before, I knew [that] I wanted to make a difference. I would never have known that I would have so many experiences, but I did know that I wanted to go to college to prove that I was a leader. (S/J/2)

The Matriarch theorized that quite often, other people would feel threatened if the leader acquires new knowledge, while they do not. This discrepancy in personal growth and development might contribute to their own fear of failure or force them to acknowledge their unwillingness to change and grow, which can make them feel uncomfortable. She explored these awkward dynamics in her interview:

We face jealousy when some see us acquiring knowledge through education, and they fear that they themselves are stagnant. Some people are reluctant to change. We face challenges with people who are fearful of education. Sometimes, people are afraid of exploring something new because they fear failure. (M/I/9)

These emerging leaders felt through their education that they were able to make a difference in other people's lives. The Butterfly reflected:

My first experience with a true leadership role [occurred] because I knew Spanish. I always looked for opportunities to help. I was that student [who] asked her teacher how I could help. My kindergarten teacher knew that I could speak Spanish and used me as a translator. I remember being prideful that I was given such a job. This first experience of feeling like a vital tool in my classroom gave me the drive to search for other ways to make a difference. (B/J/2)

The Guardian Angel learned to be open to new ideas and the opinions of others as ways of acquiring knowledge. She stated, "We have to be open to recognizing the perspectives of others, and I think that [this] comes with experience. Once you have experience, you acquire greater knowledge and insights and bring forth the perspectives of others more authentically" (G/I/2).

"A leader never stops learning and gains knowledge to give knowledge."

The Swan (S/C/1)

The theme of acquiring knowledge applied to both formal education and to the insights gained from life experience. Certainly, learning a new language or completing a degree program requires determination and perseverance, traits useful for any leader.

However, the participants also spoke of the benefits of the validation that can come from acquiring knowledge.

Theme 8: Engaging in Reflection

Reflection can be important in the quest for personal transformation or when figuring out what needs to change to make an organization more effective. Reflection can involve pondering one's goals, one's experiences, and the processes that one goes through to achieve goals. Reflection can involve learning from failure, figuring out why certain approaches proved unsuccessful. This type of reflection is an important component of developing leadership skills. Leaders must reflect on why others respond in certain ways or why they fail to take actions that might be beneficial. Motivating and persuading others require leaders to reflect on a variety of issues. Everyone has only a certain breadth of experience, so it takes reflection to be able to understand the experiences of others and how these may affect them and others.

Reflection on one's own experiences is as important as reflecting on the experiences of others. There is no substitute for experience in developing leadership abilities. Different experiences affect people differently. For the Butterfly, going to college was transformational in helping her to learn what it meant to be a leader. Facing challenges and encountering people whom she regarded as strong leaders also "definitely changed me," she noted (B/F/1). Although going to college was among the life experiences that had been most transformative for the Butterfly, the Guardian Angel counted giving birth to a son and being a parent as experiences that had changed her profoundly. She believed that these experiences made her more aware of the needs of other people. She explained, "I am not saying that people who don't have children don't

have that capacity, but for me, it was an experience that changed me completely.”

The other experience she counted as changing her profoundly was coming to this country (G/I/4).

“Reflecting on how I reached the point to actually consider myself a leader has been a journey.”

The Swan (S/J/1)

One of the things that some of these emerging leaders realized through reflecting on their experiences was the need to provide for self-care, not just the need to recognize the importance of helping take care of the needs of others. The Butterfly observed, “I am so much of a giver [that] I tend to forget about taking care of myself.” It can be easy to lose oneself in the midst of working toward other goals. “Sometimes we forget about what we want because we do not take the time to reflect about what we want in life,” the Butterfly commented. “This realization was a defining point for me because I have started to think more deliberately.” She came to place a premium on balancing self and others, which she saw as a win–win proposition: “Ultimately, you always become a better leader and a better person if you are thoughtful and take time to care for yourself while you are caring for others.” The encounters with others provided her with much food for thought, so she liked to reflect on what other people said and did, as well as upon her own needs and desires. This had resulted, for her, in “constant reflection” and ongoing personal growth and change. “Our definition of who we are changes” (B/I/6). As she noted, reflection is a key part of this: “Reflection is a critical part of learning and growing” (B/F/11).

“I believe that leaders reflect on their past to help shape their future.”

The Butterfly (B/C/1)

The Matriarch was aware that at her young age, she had not yet had a huge amount of life experience, yet she was reflective by nature and valued that aspect of herself. In her community involvement, she constantly asked herself, “How can I make this a better place, and how can I change somebody’s life?” She valued the challenges that helped her to become more reflective. She noted that she often reflected upon how she could make the world a better place (M/I/8). Improving the world necessitates pulling back from the details to see the bigger picture.

“Sometimes people do not take time to reflect and never change because they are resistant to considering possibilities.”

The Matriarch (M/F/10)

The Cheerleader noted how restricted each person’s experiences are, resulting in “limited knowledge.” One implication of this is that every one of us can learn much from others because their life experiences have been different. “When they tell you about their perspectives, they expand your horizons. They open your mind up, and you may take a different path to whatever lies ahead because of your connection.” Because all people have been shaped by their own unique blend of experiences, the chances are great that others have thought of things that leaders have not considered because nothing in their life experiences would have prompted such issues. Nevertheless, if others share their thoughts, ideas, and experiences, we “can reflect upon [what they say] and incorporate the lesson” (C/I/5).

“A leader must reflect on failure and success and learn from defeat and victory.”

The Swan (S/C/1)

Perhaps no leader is ever completely prepared or utterly competent at facing the challenges of authority and responsibility, so optimal leadership requires acknowledging

personal limitations and being willing to learn from setbacks and failures. Leaders must admit it when things are not working optimally. They must be willing to ask such questions as “What needs to be done differently to make my organization more effective?” and “What is not working the way I want it to work in my life?” These emerging leaders seemed willing to ask such tough questions. Being a leader is not easy. That may be why the participants stressed the importance of self-care in wrestling with the challenges of organizational leadership.

Theme 9: Striving for Growth

Sometimes the impetus for personal growth comes in the form of a crisis or disorienting dilemma. A dilemma can mobilize fears, which can in turn result in marshalling resources in the struggle to survive. This can include activating support networks and relationships with mentors. Commitment and resolve can be products of a dilemma, which can force people to clarify their values and priorities. Leaders seem to steer toward such predicaments rather than away from them, according to the participants in this study. As the Swan surmised, “A leader knows that there are bumpy roads ahead, but chooses not to take the smooth ride [so as] to learn and grow along the way” (S/C/1). Failure can be a great teacher, and leaders should remember this when they or others make mistakes.

“It is important to be able to cope with failure because it will happen. How you deal with failure is very important in determining your growth ultimately.”

The Diplomat (D/F/11)

Ironically, a major setback or even a great success can throw one’s values and priorities into sharper focus and stimulate personal growth. Growth is often met with mixed feelings. As the Cheerleader noted, “You have to go out on a limb and try

different things to grow, and if you fail, you try again. If you succeed, you celebrate your success. It is a challenge to take risks” (C/F/11).

Sometimes, leaders are committed to the mission of an organization, but too many factors weigh against their successful ongoing participation in that organization. This can be a painful type of personal and professional growth. That was the case for the Swan in an organization with which she had been affiliated: “The leaders of an organization I worked at had a singular style of leadership [that] was a challenge because it was completely different [from] mine. There were financial challenges, and there was a lack of collaboration” (S/J/5). The Swan reluctantly admitted that the problems were insoluble. She concluded that the organization was not a suitable workplace for her. Rather than hanging on, while beset by a nagging fear of being incompetent, she decided to resign from her position. This was not an easy decision for her, as she had mixed feelings:

My heart was in the organization, but there was no strategic planning, and I felt lost. As a leader, I feel [that] I helped to the best of my ability, but I also knew when it was time to let go. I still needed to grow more as a leader. I did not consider [leaving this organization as a personal] failure because I learned from the experience. The lesson allowed me to further build my leadership. I wanted to better myself by pursuing a master’s degree and later became a community health advocate to support others. (S/J/5)

Sometimes, the biggest mistakes are the greatest teachers, the precursors to personal and professional growth. Therefore, as the Cheerleader argued, “Leaders have to

allow others to make errors and to learn from their mistakes.” This requires self-mastery in the face of the temptation to rush in to fix things. The Cheerleader elaborated,

The best leaders that I have learned from have allowed me to make colossal mistakes. I have experienced growth and strive to [avoid repeating] the same mistake. . . . Leadership is knowing when to allow others to flourish in leadership, especially when someone with greater leadership potential emerges. A leader has to be mature. Immature leaders do not know how to deal with people’s needs, whether [they are] emotional, academic, or professional. (C/J/1)

The Swan remarked that a long time ago, she had obtained a fake ID, which had landed her in legal difficulties. As she said, this “was one of my most challenging experiences, and it made me reflect on my life and steered me in another direction.” Like the Cheerleader, the Swan could see the value of making mistakes. “I don’t think that brings me down as a leader,” she commented. “I think it makes me a better leader because I handle situations differently because I don’t think I have gotten away with anything.” One of the lessons from this experience was taking responsibility. Perhaps humility was another key lesson from this experience that all leaders would do well to remember. The Swan noted that leaders need to “realize [that] everyone makes mistakes, and we just have to learn and grow from these experiences.” Like the other emerging leaders in this study, she combined high ideals with the willingness to see herself and the world for what they are: “I know how the system works, and not everything is roses and perfect. So [knowing that I have made mistakes] does make me more compassionate and understanding” (S/I/5).

“We are certainly affected by positive influences, but [growth] is also about learning from bad experiences and taking the bad and turning it into something good so you don’t make the same mistakes [again]. This is very difficult because you have to reflect, and this can be extremely painful when you recount negative experiences to heal and grow.”
The Guardian Angel (G/F/11)

Because striving for growth involves the risk—and often the experience—of failure, leaders need to foster an environment in which taking risks is made safer because support and loyalty have been established as key values. The Matriarch reflected on how mentors had taught this to her:

I learned from strong mentors the importance of dedication. . . . I realized the importance of loyalty, but I have come to realize that there were others [who] would support you throughout difficult times. There were times that I thought it was the end of the world, but our collegiate leadership development team made a commitment to one another and was there for others. I would go to the end of the world for them because they encouraged me to be strong and to grow constantly. I would not have finished college without this support. (M/I/7)

Mentors helped fill in the gaps that the Matriarch’s own parents were unable to fill due to the limits of their own experience:

My parents wanted me to complete my education. Key supporters extended their loyalty and commitment to get me to that point. [They] were at my graduation and my wedding and all the [other] major occasions. A leader should never lose touch with the people who develop them and the people they develop. We have always been there to help each other. There was loyalty. I learned to emulate this in my leadership. (M/I/7)

Growth can be triggered by an event or a new experience. The Swan observed, “Sometimes we run across situations that challenge us to change, and we are transformed along the way” (S/J/5). When something major happens in the world or within a person’s personal life, a spark for change can ignite. Those momentous changes often help people see the value of initiating or acquiescing in the process of growth and transformation. Some events enable people to believe wholeheartedly in the mission of their organization. At such times, one can sense the momentum of change as akin to a physical force that will push self and others as they work toward a shared goal while encountering obstacles. As the Butterfly noted, “As long as [everyone is] working toward the same vision and you hold true to your values, everything will be fine, regardless [of whether] there are challenges” (B/J/6). Experiences can lead to learning and growth, particularly if one realizes that everyone can serve as a leader, regardless of age or station in life. Growth that the leader experiences in life can encourage others to see themselves as leaders, especially when they have never before seen that potential in themselves.

“Throughout my short life and career, I have experienced many memorable moments, some good and some bad, all of which I have learned and grown from. Through these experiences, I have grown to make me who I am today.”

The Matriarch (M/J/4)

The Matriarch’s participation in the collegiate leadership development program helped her to grow professionally. The Matriarch noted the many skills that she gained or honed through her participation in that program, including mastering time management and taking responsibility for her effect on others. She learned in that program, as she put it, “not only because I was a participant, but [also] because I was a supervisor.” This meant that the “monkey see, monkey do” principle was in operation, so she had to be

mindful of the signals she sent to others through her own actions: “I had to lead by example. If I was late, others would follow because I needed to serve as an example to guide others as a mentor or a role model” (M/I/10). It taught her patience, multitasking, and research skills to find community resources.

Growth as a leader can come through mastery of skills. Some noted that they grew from responsibilities and opportunities that they were provided early in life, which prepared them to serve as leaders later in life. Others noted as they reflected on their own personal growth, the experiences that were designed to facilitate professional growth and development.

“Leadership involves evolution and growth. Change is inevitable, and as a consequence, a leader must be willing and motivated to embrace new and exciting ideas that emerge.”
The Cheerleader (C/C/1)

The Matriarch reflected on the influence of early life experiences in shaping her leadership style and mastery of skills. She noted, “Being the oldest of three children and the daughter of immigrant parents has had the largest influence on the development of my leadership style” (M/I/9). She credited being given responsibilities early in life with her ability to assume the responsibilities of leadership in her professional life. “I was always given the task to make sure [that] my siblings were fed and taken care of, while my parents worked two to three jobs to maintain our household” (M/I/9).

However, because of her greater mastery of English than her parents had possessed, she stepped into various adult responsibilities at an unusually early age, which forced her to grow up fast: “Growing up, I was looked at as my parents’ personal attorney to get their thoughts and/or point across. As I matured, I had plenty of responsibility, much more than other children my age” (M/I/9). This caused her to be self-aware and to

take responsibilities during a phase of life that adults often think of (in retrospect) as relatively carefree: “I always felt like I had to think and act straight to make sure that I didn’t disappoint or influence my siblings in a manner that was unacceptable” (M/I/9).

In hindsight, she was aware of how it changed her view of the world and of her responsibilities: “Having all of this on my shoulders throughout my childhood enabled me to see the world through a different perspective and forced me to grow and mature beyond my years” (M/J/2) One ramification of taking on such responsibilities so early in life was that she could see herself early on as a leader: “I began to notice that my confidence in myself shined through, and others followed and respected me” (M/J/2).

The Matriarch was also one of the participants who commented on the ways in which she grew through her participation in a collegiate leadership development program. She noted that through it, she developed skills in conducting research and mastering multitasking. The collegiate leadership development program also taught her patience (M/I/10).

“You grow on a daily basis, and you learn every day. You can learn from a baby, and you can learn from someone who is much older. Learning is something you do on a daily basis, regardless of your age, depending on where you are in your life. The type of people [with whom] you are interacting can make a difference in your growth.”

The Guardian Angel (G/I/6)

These emerging millennial leaders perceived growth and change as constant and ongoing. The Swan’s remark was typical: “I still have more to learn when it comes to leadership, although I do define myself as a leader who continues to grow each day” (S/J/1). The participants in this study seemed to seek out the opportunities for growth that were inherent in their experiences rather than overlooking the potential for transformational learning. The Butterfly noted how much she had grown from her

experience in New York in the Teach for America program, including even the application process, in which she

competed for an assignment with thousands of others. My experiences in New York through this project pushed me to limits and resulted in growth that I had never thought possible. I was in a city on the opposite end of the country from my family, living with two people I had only known for six weeks and in a career that had nothing to do with either one of my bachelor's degrees. (B/J/6)

"I believe that leaders are always learning and growing as various people come and go in and out of their lives because they are influenced by the different perspectives that they are exposed to and carry forward with them."

The Butterfly (B/C/1)

Growth and transformation often come at a cost. As the Cheerleader noted, "Change is one of the hardest things to deal with in life, whether it is good or bad" (C/I/5). The disorienting dilemma or crisis that leads to great growth can be unsettling and disturbing. As the Cheerleader reflected,

change involves shifting from something that you are comfortable with and incorporating something out of the usual. Accepting change reflects maturity; [people who] deal well with change show that they are wise. I am dealing with change better as I mature. (C/I/5)

Change can be wonderful, but not all change is beneficial. Even when change does lead to great improvements, the process of change can be troublesome. Leaders need to be aware of the stresses that they impose on others while envisioning themselves as change agents and seeking organizational change. All of these emerging leaders had visions of the social changes that they would like to help bring into being. However, the

Guardian Angel pointed out the need for continuity in the midst of the process of change and growth: “Leadership is about consistency. If a leader constantly changes in attitude and behavior, then the community will not trust [that leader]. That doesn’t mean that [leaders] can’t change. . . . Change comes with experience” (G/C/1). These emerging leaders seemed to know that there would always be resistance to change, so change for change’s sake can be counterproductive. As the Swan noted,

Being different is not necessarily good. You can be creative without being too radical. Creativity is about considering unique ideas and finding solutions that are reasonable and that allow you to grow and move forward instead of just pursuing change because you want to be different. (S/F/10)

The Diplomat seemed leery of change for the sake of change. People in organizations expect each new leader to try to be different, but they may approach any new leader with skepticism, at least as long as they fear or believe that the disruptions and difficulties of change may not be justified by any real improvements. The Diplomat reflected on this phenomenon from her experience in the public sphere:

I have been in the public realm throughout my leadership experience. Every time there is a new leader, there is change. Some leadership shifts are more dramatic than others. It is important to understand the changes and to adapt. If you are not adaptable and flexible, you are not going to grow, and you will get discouraged. Many people do not embrace change because they fear failure. [Nonetheless,] often, we realize that change can result in constructive developments. (D/I/5)

“My experiences have made me more compassionate because I understand that we are afraid of the unknown and do not want to change because we fear failure. I know that I

am more compassionate of those I serve and have grown as a person because of my own failures that have led me to a leadership style that stems from the heart.”

The Swan (S/J/5)

These emerging leaders had devised various strategies for coping with the stresses of growth and transformation, whether these stresses were their own or others'. The Swan said that she could hone in on those people who were resistant to change “because they may be bitter or they let everything build up, [although] they have to let that negativity go. People are fearful of change, and some are never going to change, and I know that.” That is a challenge that every leader faces. Offsetting this difficulty is the fact that others embrace change: “My inspiration is knowing that many people are eager for constructive change and growth because they want a better life” (S/I/5).

The Butterfly viewed her response to such stresses as switching into what she called “survival mode”:

When presented with challenges, I put myself in survival mode. I capitalize on my strength and commit myself to serving others. My experience in New York made me realize that I had the power to overcome any challenge. It also made me realize that I had the drive to make a difference and was committed to growing as a person and leader. (B/J/6)

The Matriarch's strategy for negotiating growth and transformation seemed to pivot around allegiance to core values and loyalty to other people. Like the others, she saw experience as a great teacher and believed that growth was ongoing. She valued community service as a source of personal growth and transformation. She found the inspiration of other leaders helpful in holding on to important values and not getting carried away by career success and personal achievement. As the Matriarch noted,

Knowing people [whom] you respect from the community [who] are going that extra mile to help others inspires us to grow because it shows us that there is more to life than self-fulfillment. Some people become materialistic and feel that you have to have a big house and a fancy new car. It is not what matters. In a two-year period, I have tripled my salary, and I can have anything I want, but without the people [who] have [helped] me, I am nothing. (M/I/8)

“You have to be able to measure your growth to gauge your progress, so when you are going through change, you have to reflect upon your growth in consideration of failures and successes. This is difficult because people limit their possibilities when they are fearful of failing instead of taking risks and accepting that sometimes we have to fail to eventually achieve success.”

The Matriarch (M/F/11)

Assertiveness, which may sometimes amount to the old heroic virtue of courage, was another coping skill for negotiating the stresses of growth and transformation. The Guardian Angel viewed assertiveness as a cardinal trait for leaders:

To create change, you have to stand up for yourself and others. It is important that you do not just say the things that people want to hear, but [also] that you are honest. I am outspoken. If I am not pleased about something, I speak up. That was a major issue with my last employer. I spoke up; everybody else was extremely afraid. They had to bring in a mediator. It was a really hard experience. I still have nightmares about it, but I know I made a major difference. Standing for what you believe in feels right, even it is not easy. (G/I/5)

The Swan concurred about the importance of assertiveness. She noted, “It is very important as a leader not to let people step all over you just because of what people might

say about you or how they might feel about you because of a challenging situation”

(S/I/5). The Cheerleader also championed the virtue of courage in leadership:

Leadership is about standing up for what is right, even if you do not always make the popular choice. It is about standing up for others, especially those who are less capable of defending themselves, and guarding them with all your might.

Being a leader is about being well-rounded and educated, knowing boundaries, laws, history, and the culture of the organization, and not allowing people to step all over you. (C/J/1)

“You have to have the wisdom to know what is right and the courage to pursue justice. It is through challenges that we remain authentic and grow the most.”

The Guardian Angel (G/I/5)

Acquiring knowledge centered on intellectual mastery (such as the skills of fluency in a new language) or formal educational attainment, whereas striving for growth concerned development of character or personality. Striving for growth involved emotional dynamics and core values. This transformation of self often stemmed from a crisis or disorienting dilemma that forced the issue of clarifying personal values. The end product of such an ordeal might be viewed as the emotional maturity or the depth of character needed to face one’s deepest fears and to marshal the resources needed to survive any challenge.

The third secondary research question was: **4. How is emergent organizational and community leadership fostered through a collegiate leadership development program?** These leaders were determined to make a positive impact on society because of their quest for social justice and a passionate vision for constructive change. They strove to transform society because they believed that the lives of others could be

improved through their contributions. The themes of **pursuing civic engagement**, **building capacity**, and **envisioning millennial contributions** reflected their vision as leaders.

Theme 10: Pursuing Civic Engagement

The participants valued community service and found it fulfilling. They wanted to make a difference in their communities. They were willing to acknowledge the suffering in the community in the forms of poverty, hunger, and mental illness, as well as with the many difficulties that elementary, middle, and high school students were experiencing. They spoke of the need to be aware of these issues and the desire to give back to the community. They noted the importance of understanding what people are going through and respecting them when they are in the midst of overwhelming challenges. It was equally important for them to show understanding and respect when interacting with affluent professionals and recognized leaders. Communication skills and sensitivity are vital in community service. The six emerging leaders spoke of how much they developed their leadership skills and their self-concept as leaders through their involvement with community service. Some noted the importance of role models in coming to recognize the significance of civic engagement.

“The dynamics of the collegiate leadership development program resulted in a shared vision. I am part of other groups and organizations, and I am confident because I know that creating a shared vision is possible because of this experience.”

The Cheerleader (C/F/11)

Community service involves creating change while feeling empathy for and making a connection with others. Having experienced the same trials that the people in

the community have faced may be a plus, but it is not essential. The Guardian Angel learned from working with someone who lacked the key trait of empathy:

I used to work with a [callous] person [who lacked compassion]. We worked with children from poor families. She came from a wealthy family and had gone to the best private schools and could not connect with the community. I think it was just her personality because she could not understand their experiences. You don't necessarily have to go through challenges yourself to understand the difficulties of others, but you have to be empathetic to connect. She had to be removed from that assignment because the community felt so uncomfortable, not because she was a bad person, but because she could not connect with people. (G/F/8)

This need in community service for empathy, sensitivity, and respect extends not only to people from poor families or communities, but also to people from wealthy and powerful groups. Community-service leaders need to be skillful in their interactions with people from many types of backgrounds, as the Swan realized:

When greeting people at an art gallery for a community event, [I noticed that] the majority of the participants were community leaders. It was important for us as emerging leaders to feel comfortable. We interacted with doctors, attorneys, and members of disadvantaged groups. We had to be extremely respectful, regardless of the environment. (S/F/8)

The Diplomat echoed the importance of cultural sensitivity:

The collegiate leadership development program taught me a lot about working with others [who] are different. It also taught me about cultural sensitivity and adopting an organization's goals into my own goals. Much of what we did was

community-oriented; therefore, understanding the needs of the community and my team members was major in our mission. Embracing different perspectives and contributing positively to research and community service was rewarding. (D/I/6)

“We have to be understanding because people are starving and suffering. You have to understand where people are in their lives. Compassion and understanding are important qualities for leadership.”

The Guardian Angel (G/F/8)

Vision and a commitment to change are at the heart of community service. As the Cheerleader saw things, speaking out against injustice was incumbent upon a leader. A leader must be active in creating change, whether the particular issue is major or minor. As she said,

One of my windows got broken, and I met with the neighborhood association. If you are not involved, then don't expect change. This is something that I learned through the collegiate leadership development program: you have to be part of your community. You can't stand aside and expect changes to happen if you don't make [them] happen. (C/I/3)

The Cheerleader underscored the importance of working together with the community, while respecting its culture. She said that the collegiate leadership development program had highlighted this principle. As she said,

In my community, it is all about working in collaboration. There is no sense in trying to impose radical ideas on this group. Rather, there has to be respect gained from the community. Leaders have to be careful to hold a respectful cultural standard and to have an outstanding record of behavior to have credibility and to have the power to change things. (C/J/3)

Community service entails leaving the ivory tower. In the process of venturing out into the community, leaders can gain a sense of who they are and what their mission is, according to the Cheerleader:

If we did not go out into communities to volunteer and get outside the academic environment, [then] we wouldn't be the leaders we are today. It is important for us to get people involved. We were going beyond the learning environment provided in the classroom. We were putting our feet on the ground and rolling up our sleeves. We took what we could from [this experience], and we gave back. We are still giving back from this experience. (C/F/9)

Several principles seemed to guide effective community service, as these six emerging leaders reflected upon their experiences, including the importance of role models and networks. Guiding by example and placing high expectations on others were also key principles. Role models can be instrumental, as was the case in the Butterfly's experience with Teach for America, in working with uneducated immigrants from the Dominican Republic, for whom a successful lawyer was inspirational. "Demonstrating that he came from the same background and that he went through similar struggles and was successful was an inspiration to the students" (B/F/9). High expectations also contributed to the effectiveness of community service, as the Matriarch noted:

The high expectations propelled us to be more successful. Everyone in the collegiate leadership development program had such high expectations; no one was left behind. Everyone had to lead a project. It was only as successful as the group made it together because each person assumed a leadership role. (M/F/12)

“If you do not like the ways of the world, do something about [changing them]. It is just like a self-image. If you don’t like what you see, then what are you doing to improve yourself? It has to do with your speaking up and with your being involved in your community if you want to see change.”

The Cheerleader (C/I/3)

Another key principle that contributed to the success of community service seemed to be the benefit of networking. The Matriarch observed, “The people I have met allowed me to develop a network that is a resource to support my organization when I need support with a project. I can seek insights from a range of contacts from my various experiences” (M/I/3). The Cheerleader also stressed the importance of networking:

The collegiate leadership development program provided me with friends and support that has fostered my love for education. All the community outreach programs we took part in have influenced my passion for supporting others. It was inspiring to interact with incredible colleagues and mentors [who] guided me forward in my quest to be a leader. (C/I/6)

Community service was important to these six emerging leaders, and this community service took many forms. For example, the Butterfly served in the Teach for America program, while the Guardian Angel provided tutoring in after-school programs. The Diplomat worked in broadening science and math achievement within the community. The Swan launched a chapter of a multicultural service sorority on her college campus.

The Diplomat’s push for greater science and math achievement was fueled by a passion for egalitarianism and social justice. Acquiring these skills, the Diplomat felt, should not be the preserve of the socioeconomic or intellectual elite. Everyone, she felt, ultimately benefited by a greater diffusion of science and math skills:

People could see that we cared about the community because of our focus on science and math needed to be strong subjects for all people, not just a small group [who] have additional opportunities. Reaching out to others had a strong impact. This is an issue not only for our country, but [also] for the entire world.
(D/I/7)

The Diplomat's community service also took the form of volunteer work with Amigos de las Americas, in which the value of collaboration emerged.

We constantly collaborated with organizations for donations, the ministries of health in Mexico and Costa Rica for assistance with building latrines, and community members for assistance with our annual training. I was assigned three partners each summer to live and work with in rural communities abroad. It was essential that we came together to accomplish the goals of the organization, as well as to establish community needs assessments and sustainable development.
(D/J/4)

The Swan created a sorority and a co-ed business leadership program on her campus:

As I started becoming more confident in college, I realized that I could get involved with different organizations and get to know others instead of being afraid of being judged. I decided to start a chapter of a national multicultural service sorority. The mission of the organization was to be a part of a sisterhood, regardless of race, culture, religion, background, or lifestyle. I chose to bring something different. Embracing differences in our campus and community through civic engagement motivated many of us to work together. . . . The

mission of the [co-ed business leadership] organization was to provide students with personal development opportunities and to enhance their professionalism. I grew as a professional and became involved in fundraising, professional development, community service, and social events. (S/J/3–4)

The Diplomat was engaged in international service and commented on how much she learned from the people she served, many of whom lived in abject poverty:

You see poverty and [that] it is subjective. Being exposed to that poverty in the third world makes you more appreciative and [makes you feel] truly blessed with what you have. We can relate to people who are so different [from] us. I never imagined myself marrying a Muslim from Afghanistan. I feel that I am part of his family, even though I do not speak the language, and I am still learning how to relate to a different culture. (D/F/8)

“Being part of a collegiate leadership development program taught me much as a leader and as a person. It taught me the importance of community work and advocating for our children, who are the future of our society.”

The Guardian Angel (G/J/5)

In the collegiate leadership development program, community service was a key component. The Butterfly commented on the importance of community service in the leadership development program in which she participated through Teach for America. That involvement led her to work with many students from the Dominican Republic who had received no formal education prior to their arrival in New York City. The Matriarch commented on three key components of the collegiate leadership development program: “community service, researching service providers nationwide, and maintaining a database.” Of these, she found the community service component to be the most

instructive, “whether it was helping with a community clean-up, providing tutoring for middle and high school students, volunteering to be a judge for a science fair, or simply participating in information sessions at health fairs, job fairs, or theme days” (M/J/3).

The Swan learned a lot from her participation in the collegiate leadership development program, including what leadership means. As she reflected,

I never really understood the term *leadership* until I went to college. Through the collegiate leadership development program, I got involved in something positive. I would never have thought that I would have grown into the leader I am now when I joined the team, but the very first day, I could feel the support that I was surrounded with. Getting involved was the first clue to me about leadership. I had no idea [then] that giving back to my campus and community would bring out the best in me. (S/J/1)

In that program, the Swan interacted with others from many different backgrounds:

Through the collegiate leadership development program, I worked with others similar to me and entirely different [from] me. [This experience] made me realize that I was not the only person [who] struggled; [this experience] taught me that anything can be accomplished. We all had a common goal: to get involved in our community and to serve others. We had the opportunity to give back to our community, and this gave us training on leadership when we attended leadership forums. (S/J/2)

The Diplomat noted that one leadership experience led to another, with her own learning and development as a leader being an ongoing process:

Since being in the collegiate leadership development program and in the workforce, I have gained experience in leadership roles that reinforced my passion for community building and enhanced my ability to see myself as a leader. Now I am in another leadership development program. Each time you get selected for such opportunities, it builds your confidence. Along the way, you build your skills. (D/I/3)

She found collaboration to be a key value in the collegiate leadership development program:

As a participant in a collegiate leadership development program, I was placed into a unique environment with individuals from different backgrounds to accomplish specific goals set by the organization. We participated in numerous outreach activities. An example is the formation of various science-awareness initiatives. [These initiatives were] built out of a large-scale collaboration with local museums and educational institutions to “change the face of science.” I assisted with developing this effort. It is still transforming the community today. (DJ/4)

This experience helped the Diplomat to learn many valuable lessons that revolved around the value of community service: “Since my participation, I have been more comfortable and confident pursuing and developing relationships with community groups. I have seen the effectiveness of collaboration in accomplishing goals more effectively and profoundly” (D/J/5). As she elaborated about her involvement in the collegiate leadership development program:

I developed lifelong relationships with the other student fellows in this program and have realized that combining my strengths with the strengths of others can

[influence] an organization positively. I was able to experience the entire collaborative process through community outreach. The leadership institute exposed me to a broader knowledge of what leadership and organizational development entail. Collegiate leadership programs should require frequent involvement in community service. (D/J/5)

Some of the emerging leaders followed the example of their parents in participating in community service. This was the case for the Diplomat, who reflected, I grew up with having to be active in the community. My parents were always involved in the community, and my mom was in the PTA and [was] always volunteering. I was in girl scouts or volunteering with my brothers and sisters. My mom was always on the board of something. We all have a responsibility to be involved because ultimately, your community will be better with your participation. Participating in the various organizations that I did as a teenager and as a young adult provided me with opportunities to continue this journey.

(D/I/4)

“I believe that everyone has the responsibility to go out there to do something for the community without expecting anything in return. The rewards are far greater than any sacrifice.”

The Swan (S/I/5)

The rewards of community service for those who provide it include the intrinsic satisfaction or sense of fulfillment that it can provide, although, as the Matriarch noted, “sometimes, people volunteer for the prestige” that doing so could provide (M/J/3). The Cheerleader said, “You have to be passionate about what you do when you are in an educational setting, and because people are not in it because of the money, it is more of

an emotional reward to be in this role” (C/I/6). As the Guardian Angel put it, “just knowing that you are able to help other people is gratifying” (G/I/4). For the Matriarch, the reward was in making a difference in the community, where pressing problems of poverty, hunger, or mental illness beset many people. Satisfaction can be derived from helping one person at a time; the Matriarch noted, “I know I am not going to help the entire world, but you can start with one and make your way to others” (M/I/7).

“Not just through community service, but [also] through my most recent life experiences, I have realized that I am not capable of helping the entire world. If you go in with that mindset of saving an entire community or the entire world, you are going to be disappointed, and when you realize that you can help one person at a time, that is an accomplishment in itself because that person in turn will do the same thing, and the impact will be even greater.”

The Matriarch (M/F/9)

Some projects do reach quite a few people, not just one or two at a time. The Guardian Angel noted the satisfaction that came from affecting many people’s lives:

Not everyone has the opportunity to be in the position of trying to help others or making a difference in a community. We brought hundreds of families to museums. For many, this was the first time in their lives that they [had been] able to go to a museum. I know we made a tremendous difference. (G/I/4)

The Guardian Angel derived great satisfaction from seeing students in the after-school program gradually become more motivated as they confronted their own fear of failure and all of the nervousness and anxiety that attended that fear. They identified with the others in the group and could share with them the joy of making progress in their endeavors. The Guardian Angel commented upon “seeing positive changes through their reactions, not only because of their progress, but [also] because they [felt] comfortable with themselves” through improvements in their self-esteem. “You know how satisfied

they are with themselves” (G/I/4). Parents also derived satisfaction from their children’s progress, and the Guardian Angel enjoyed “being able to work one-on-one with families, providing them the skills, tools, and resources” that they needed. The reward came in the form of seeing the “little smiling faces in our schools,” which validated “all our hard work in the community” (G/J/5). The Cheerleader realized, “Being part of the educational environment is what I really enjoy. I get energized because I am doing things on behalf of others, and community organizing drives me” (C/I/3). The intrinsic satisfactions derived from community service replenished the passion for social change that inspired these emerging leaders.

“Often, when we are engaged in community service, we go in thinking that you are going to help others, but you end up learning more than those you are supporting. When any of us goes out into a community that is different from our own, we are ambassadors, and how we treat other people affects how our culture is viewed because we are creating an example that endures.”

The Diplomat (D/F/8)

The Cheerleader reflected upon her passion for working with children that this spoke to her in ways that surpassed her interest in other subjects and academic disciplines,

When we were volunteering with children, I discovered what I wanted to do with my life. I was taking classes and exploring dentistry, architecture, and languages. I was happiest when I worked with kids. People look up to me, and I feel honored. I have experiences that I can use to help others. I am not a counselor, but I can relate to what they are going through. I can refer them to somebody [who] can help them. (C/I/4)

Another benefit of engaging in community service was the personal growth and transformational learning that such service provided to the participants. As the Matriarch commented, community service helped her to become more aware of challenges and opportunities in the community. Community service “opened my eyes to the experiences of others and realizing what my parents went through and realizing their struggles and understanding these challenges and wanting to make a difference in the lives of others.” She added that her involvement in community service made her more grateful for what others had done to help her and her family (M/F/7).

“Humility is an important quality in leadership. Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less. I believe that leaders who are authentic and humble think of themselves less and are always putting forth for someone else. You must always think about how you can help others and how you can support the community.”

The Butterfly (B/F/9)

Pursuing civic engagement was at the heart of the participants’ approach to leadership. They believed strongly in providing community service. They were committed to creating change. They felt empathy for others in the community and valued the connection with them. They stressed the importance of cultural sensitivity. The community service component of the collegiate leadership development program in which all of them had participated was one of the aspects of that program that they valued most highly.

Theme 11: Building Capacity

These emerging leaders wished to make an impact on society. To do so, they felt that they had to work hard, remain determined, and collaborate with others to help empower them. They wanted to help others grow, in part by helping them to realize that they were capable and important. Leaders help others acknowledge their own capabilities

and potential. Leaders can also guide and motivate others to improve their skills and abilities. For leaders to bring their goals into being, they had to remain open and flexible, listen to others, discover their needs, and find out what strengths and resources they can contribute. These emerging leaders had to keep in touch with the hopes of others to fulfill their expectations. These leaders had to help others learn how to work together toward common goals. They were also willing to put others' interests above self-interest to build individual and organizational capacity. Impediments to building capacity included generalized resistance to change. Overcoming this resistance required nurturing leadership. Sometimes, the leader had to work toward transforming the environment or institutional culture so that people were more willing to contribute constructively in pursuit of growth and development.

“I want to give others a chance to be leaders because I was given this opportunity and I know that people become stronger and grow through such opportunities. Not just getting ingrained in the fact that you are a leader, but realizing that other people have talent and recognizing that, and giving them a chance and not being jealous or feeling envy because some individuals will rise when given the opportunity.”

The Guardian Angel (G/F/12)

Empowering individuals, in part through getting them to believe in themselves, is central to building capacity. The Cheerleader said, “Many parents, at least in my community, don't know what they are capable of, so they need to hear that from me” (C/I/2). She added,

It is important to recognize when someone does something right, yet it is also necessary to point out mistakes and to provide support to overcome challenges. It is important to know that you are valued in an organization and that you are important to somebody. (C/I/3)

“We all have been identified as leaders in our lives, but imagine if we had no one who believed in us and no one who nurtured our potential.”

The Diplomat (D/F/6)

The Diplomat reflected on the power of being singled out as a leader and the importance of taking negative messages into consideration, as their effects are so profound:

This we study in psychology: if you are given a stigma, you meet these expectations. The same is true when you fulfill positive expectations. If you have leadership potential and others take time to nurture it, it will come forth. I was involved in the National Association for Student Councils and was exposed to leadership early in life. Another valuable experience was a cultural exchange program that placed me in Oaxaca, Mexico, for one year and the next year in Costa Rica to develop communities. People [who] grow up without a positive quality being attributed to them are less inclined to be leaders because no one ever says they have the potential to be a leader. (D/I/3)

“When leaders make others feel like leaders, even if they have never seen themselves in that role, this is powerful and transformational.”

The Diplomat (D/C/1)

The Matriarch had mentored team members and guided them to achieve more. She took a philosophical, almost detached, view of building capacity, reflecting that those she had mentored were learning and that some of them were considering higher education: “I am probably going to lose some team members because of it, but in the long run, it is worth it to me because eventually, I know [that] they are going to do something [that] they truly love” (M/J/1). The Cheerleader also expressed her belief in the importance of taking advantage of continuing educational opportunities, “such as taking a

computer class or an English class. You give [team members] time to pursue training, and you ask them what skills they desire or are lacking to encourage them to build their skills” (C/F/1).

“Leaders find and bring out the potential in others; their greatest success is for others to continue forward in support of others.”

The Swan (S/C/1)

The Butterfly emphasized the importance of empowering others: “Giving support and inspiring everyone to realize that they have the ability to contribute to the team is a major part of building your capacity as individuals and as an organization” (B/F/2). The Matriarch noted the benefits of taking a businesslike perspective, in particular the view of human resources, in building capacity:

With the learning culture that I have created, team members take college courses and accept being placed in succession-planning programs. We have been able to implement initiatives to get community members to run the business and give back to their community. They think out of the box without the fear that they are going to make a wrong decision. These team members are now giving recommendations [that take] our team to another level. (M/J/4)

In addition to courses mentioned by several emerging leaders, the Swan mentioned coordinating sessions for in-house training in such things as “public speaking, communication, and self-esteem to help them build their confidence to overcome their fears” (S/J/5). She had concluded that such training was important because many of the members of her team

were shy and irresponsible, but I gave them opportunities to give workshops and assigned them to tasks so that each could have a leadership role. I wanted them to

realize that being a leader is not necessarily about being the executive director or coordinator, but that all members of a team have a leadership role. It was not about who held power, but about empowering everyone to accomplish our goals through shared leadership. (S/J/5)

The Swan organized in-house trainings and community workshops on a wide range of topics, from preventive health (diabetes awareness, cancer prevention, etc.) to workshops on self-esteem. She also noted, “We organized special events, such as international woman’s day and addressed cultural issues and dealing with a patriarchal or male-dominated society. These events made community members feel appreciated and empowered and built a sense of community” (S/I/2).

“I believe that leaders are teachers, leaving behind an idea, philosophy, or call to action that encourages growth and development in the community from which they emerge.”
The Diplomat (D/C/1)

Empowering others is a long process. Leaders need persistence and patience to build capacity in others. Sometimes, empowering others involves giving them the permission to fail and to take risks as well as to urge them not to expect too much of themselves too quickly, which can lead to their getting discouraged and quitting prematurely. As the Guardian Angel commented,

Encouraging others to be risk-takers [is important, just as it is important to let them know that they do not have] to have all the skills [at the outset that they will need eventually]. I experienced that in coming to this country. I [have] always emphasized that it is fine to take risks and [that] if you do not do well initially, you can try again. . . . A skill is rarely mastered instantly. (G/F/2)

The Swan learned from her own imperfections (or failures) to avoid imposing perfectionist standards on others. She realized that building capacity, whether in herself or others, was a gradual process:

When I graduated from college, I realized that I had struggled with my math class, which prevented me from graduating on my expected date. This taught me that no leader is perfect. I started working for a nonprofit organization as a community-outreach coordinator. I struggled because the organization had difficulty working in teams and collaborating with other organizations. I was in a leadership position [that] consisted of organizing workshops, town-hall [meetings], and cultural-competence trainings, [as well as] supervising block leaders. (S/J/4)

Communicating clearly is an important skill in virtually all phases of leadership, including building capacity. The Diplomat noted,

It is important to define expectations. I know that I tend to set high standards, and when people do not meet them, I get frustrated. I may have assigned something that may not be within their skill set. [Their] understanding of expectations and needs and then improving their skills to build capacity is important (D/F/2). It goes back to understanding and embracing people's talents while promoting positive development. (D/F/10)

Building capacity in others can include allowing others to lead, while the leader follows. The Cheerleader pointed out the importance for a leader to know how to follow:

I am a strong believer, coming from a military background, that if you do not know how to follow, you will not know how to lead. When you show a lack of attention, or [an] inability to focus your attention to complete something, you are

also showing defiance and immaturity toward rules. Not knowing how to organize and lead a group forward or how to deal with challenging people or situations is a concern. (C/J/5)

To empower others, leaders must empower themselves, becoming “confident, strong, and passionate,” as the Matriarch put it (M/J/4). She noted that she had brought a business perspective to things and drew on her experience in human resources. She was able to win the trust and confidence of others within the organization. “With that trust, I have been able to train, guide, motivate, and inspire a team toward our goals” (M/J/4).

Part of the challenge of building capacity is discovering the resources that are available both outside the organization and inside the organization. Finding resources in the community can feel akin to navigating a maze, according to the Matriarch. As she noted, “The collegiate leadership development program provided us with the awareness that there are numerous resources that are available whenever someone in the community requires support. I learned that not everything is right before you” (M/I/2). The Swan concurred:

To know about various services, such as clinics or recreational programs, is beneficial in my leadership position. [The collegiate leadership development program] made me realize that there are a lot of community organizations out there that make a difference. I went from working at a rural hospital to serving an organization based in Washington, DC. Getting involved in community service was most rewarding for me. (S/I/7)

Within the organization, it behooves the leader to know the members of the team well, including their weaknesses, as well as their strengths and their talents. The

Butterfly surmised, “Once you know their thoughts, their talents, their strengths, and their weaknesses, you can put them in a situation that best suits them as an emerging leader or as a collaborative group member” (B/F/1). Everyone brings different strengths and weaknesses to an organization. As the Swan commented,

It is important to invite a variety of people with different talents to your organization because they have a different perspective that can foster creativity.

All of us here possess different talents and creative ideas that are unique, yet we have developed a shared vision that is framed by the community we serve.

(S/F/10)

“By knowing different people’s talents, you can access those talents for different initiatives. Someone can visualize a concept, and others may have the talents to make it a reality. Because we know the strengths of various team members, we are able to harness the energy and synergy of a collection of resources.”

The Butterfly (B/F/10)

Building capacity involves creating unity in places where previously, people had jealously guarded their individual turf. It is possible to achieve this lofty objective; the Matriarch indicated that she did so within a year of joining her organization:

In one year, I have been able to inspire a team [in which] one person was specialized in one area, and no other would dare cross that boundary to a team-oriented environment [in which] everyone has input; a buddy system has been created for backup. Decisions are made by team consensus. (M/J/4)

Creating unity requires that everyone understand the organization’s mission and then joins in the collaborative effort to achieve it. Then it is important for everyone to grasp the steps needed to achieve shared goals—a major task of leadership. “How your talents

and strengths are going to help an organization meet expectations is very important,” the Butterfly observed (B/F/2).

The Butterfly noted that she wanted to bring an organization onto her campus that could be used to unify women to work collaboratively. That is why she founded a multicultural sorority. She said, “From the minute I read about this organization on [its] Web site, I knew that it would be a great asset to students.” One of the things that she valued in that organization was its unity, which was built in part through the forums it created “about diversity, education, service, and leadership.” This organization had taken its mission of empowering women and crossed racial lines to many campuses nationwide. Its vision is to empower “women to become ‘one,’ regardless of race, color, religion, background, or lifestyle” (B/J/5).

“Just recognizing others and encouraging them to work collectively as a team builds the organization.”

The Matriarch (M/I/6)

Several of the strengths that these emerging leaders possessed came out of the crucible of the collegiate leadership development program. The Swan learned a lot in it about community building. The Butterfly met two people from a collegiate leadership development program through the summer bridge program. She gushed, “I was amazed with the qualities [that] these individuals possessed.” They instilled in her a sense of excitement about joining the collegiate leadership development program, even though she was nervous as her interview for it approached. Despite this fit of nerves, she reflected, “When I met the participants and our leader, I was blissful. I felt at home with them. I knew that the organization and its members would challenge me to grow as a leader, and they did” (B/J/4).

The other participants in her team in the collegiate leadership development program were inspirational for the Butterfly in realizing how she could work with other teams in other organizations. She noted the bittersweet paradox of having worked with such a great team: “Our team was the best, and it has been challenging to work with other organizations at times because they are not at the level of success that was realized by this group, but at the same time because of what I learned from this outstanding team, I have been able to apply it to other organizations and groups” (B/F/11).

The Matriarch also credited the collegiate leadership development program for skills that she subsequently put to good use in her leadership role. She believed that she acquired these skills both through collaborating with others inside the program and through reaching out to others in the community, “Working with a diverse population through the collegiate leadership development program, I acquired leadership skills. My leadership was influenced by working with extraordinary individuals and communities in dire need” (M/J/3).

The skills garnered from the collegiate leadership development program or elsewhere were needed to surmount the challenges of leadership. These included the challenges that are universal to management, such as building the self-confidence of subordinates, as well as the challenges of visionary or transformational leadership, which include tackling institutional inertia and resistance to change (discussed in the following paragraph). The Swan discussed a mainstream management task of building capacity in her subordinates as follows:

My leadership was tested as a community-outreach coordinator. It took a lot of organizing to make sure that seven employees I supervised were contributing and

that I provided them with opportunities to succeed. I was responsible for cultural and leadership training. I had to make sure that each member of our team was equipped to contribute. (S/F/4)

This obligation to build capacity involved recognizing subordinates' skills and abilities:

I had to consider their skills and what they were best at to support our organization. Everybody is good at something. One of them was good with creating programs for families, and one was good at expressing the highlights of culture in Columbia, and another one was good at organizing community projects. Someone else might focus on immigration [because he or she] understood the challenges. As a leader, I helped them to realize their strengths (S/I/1). You get each person involved and to take on a role with certain responsibilities so they feel a part of the organization. (S/F/4)

“I believe that the key role of leadership should be to empower team members, whereby they then can reach out to their communities with the knowledge and skills bestowed upon them.”

The Matriarch (M/C/1)

The Diplomat noted using multiple approaches to building capacity, but stressed the importance of making participants feel comfortable so that they would collaborate with greater engagement as she fostered collaboration and built capacity. She did this in various ways:

I seek input and ask questions to trigger participation and reflection so that ideas, opinions, and creativity emerge comfortably. I invite differences of opinion so that the group feels comfortable disagreeing in a professional manner. I attempt to discover the unique abilities of others so they can be connected effectively within

a community or an organization. To build capacity, I promote professional development and encourage others to build skills crucial to the organization. I support stronger communication so that all group members understand the goals. When possible, continuing education is crucial to remain competitive with other organizations, and it builds capacity. Cross-training is also an important way to build capacity. (D/J/2)

Challenges to building capacity include overcoming institutional inertia and resistance to change. First, however, the leader needs to assess whether change is vital for the organization's mission or whether current approaches can be fine-tuned rather than overhauled. The Diplomat said,

If I see something that has been done the same way for years, I will determine whether it needs adjustment. I evaluate the organization itself. I try to add something to it so that it is not just the same stagnant organization. I think [that] organizations should be improving. Increased communication and enhanced technology are important to reach out to others. Organizing resources and getting everyone together to accomplish our goals was especially important to us as part of the collegiate leadership development program. (D/I/1)

The Matriarch said, "Building capacity has been a challenge throughout my organization due to resistance to change" (M/J/1). Countering this resistance requires ingenuity, as the Matriarch noted in her project of creating a hotel geared toward providing services for children, an outside-the-box concept:

You have to explore because some organizations are linear and do not encourage feedback. You have to create an environment that embraces growing. Our

organization is building a hotel. We are opening a venue for children, and we need creativity because we want something unique that is going to make this organization successful to accomplish our mission. (M/F/9)

Thinking outside the box, it should be noted, is not just something that leaders need to encourage others to do. They must also spur themselves on to cultivate creativity. As the Guardian Angel admitted,

I struggle with creativity. I am not a perfectionist, but I try to obey rules. Sometimes, it is difficult for me to look outside that box. I have a hard time accepting change if somebody tells me, “You have to get something done in a certain way.” There are limited opportunities for creativity. But there are creative ways to reach solutions, and I must overcome this struggle with structure. (G/I/5)

If these emerging leaders expect themselves to embody creativity, they also require honesty and consistency from themselves, at least according to the Cheerleader (C/I/3). They also expect flexibility from themselves. The Diplomat noted that it was important to be open to change and to remain flexible because of constant changes in the organizational landscape. “You have to accomplish goals that are shifting. Listening and finding a consensus on the best way to move forward is possible. To be diplomatic, one must be responsive. This requires patience and flexibility” (D/I/6).

These emerging leaders drink deep from the well of their vision of a more just society to stay motivated to tackle organizational inertia and work to transform the organization and the community. The Guardian Angel reflected philosophically—and eloquently—on some of the dynamics of oppressed groups and the desire to help them from her vantage point as a community advocate:

The social injustice that people face in this country presses me to guard and protect others. I think of the social injustice that immigrants face and why they do not always integrate with society. We create our own groups, imitating the style of life [that] we would have in our own country [of origin]. This behavior is understandable for anyone who feels excluded. That is one of the reasons many people take negative paths to feel a sense of “belonging,” such as joining gangs. After seeing this type of behavior, I understood the importance of providing a constructive environment for children. Fortunately, my position allows me to introduce families to such opportunities. I try to support students and their families to overcome obstacles to obtain an education while supporting community members who live with constant struggles. (G/J/3)

The Guardian Angel elaborated that she felt the need to give back to her community and to speak up on behalf of the people who have been disempowered. “I want to work with immigrants like myself,” she said, “to empower them to take action to better their lives and their community” (G/J/6). The Cheerleader shared the goal of empowering the disempowered, although she cited a different group. She said that she would tell mothers,

You may be a younger mom, but your life is not over. You can still get educated, have a job, [and] make a difference. Putting it out there that there are opportunities for them makes a big difference, [while] letting them know that if they need support, I will help them in any way possible. (C/I/2)

Most of the emerging leaders’ comments on building capacity focused on empowering others. Although most of the participants’ reflections were focused on their

respective organizations, the Guardian Angel also saw building capacity as an issue that transcended institutional affiliation. This effort can be powerful if it is based on a vision of social justice. She explained, “Collaboration between organizations is critical. I value working as a liaison between organizations to make resources available to the public. I wish to end the abuse, violence, and the social injustice that we face in our lives” (G/J/6).

“It is important to realize what organizations are lacking as they strive to serve others. If there is something that an organization needs, you can consider ideas and gauge interest from various team members. You have to get everyone involved in moving the organization forward as a collective.”

The Cheerleader (C/F/1)

The purpose of building capacity, according to these emerging leaders, was to have a greater impact on society; they always had the end in sight, not just the means. They believed that building capacity was necessary to overcome organizational resistance to change and inertia. They practiced building capacity through mentoring others and through conducting training and workshops. They acknowledged that empowering others takes time. Building capacity requires scouting out the resources within the organization and in the community that may often be overlooked, including the latent skills of subordinates and others.

Theme 12: Envisioning Millennial Contributions

The participants had mixed feelings about their own generation, the millennials. The weaknesses that they saw in their generation included self-indulgence, laziness, apathy, and unrealistic expectations concerning instant gratification. They self-critically compared these generational traits with an idealized view of the passionate commitment to social change that they believed that the civil rights activists of the 1960s had possessed. The greatest ambivalence of the participants toward their own generation may

have centered upon their generation's relationship with state-of-the art technology. More than one mentioned that many millennials are quite content to devote hours on end to playing video games instead of engaging in community service. This assessment was underscored by the Swan's comment that "some members of our generation think [that] they know it all and are arrogant because they can build a Web site or program a computer, and this leads to generational stereotypes and friction" (S/F/13).

However, despite these criticisms of their generation, the Cheerleader characterized the millennials as "a very wise group" (C/I/6). Others characterized millennials as well-educated and as "effective communicators." One trait mentioned in passing, neither positively nor negatively, was that millennials wish to avoid workaholic excess and to balance work life with personal life. The Diplomat said, "we all want to improve organizations and the community, while still having time with our families, friends, or whatever we are engaged in personally" (D/I/7). Millennials certainly embraced diversity and multiculturalism, and the participants viewed this stance as a strong plus for their generation.

The virtues of the millennial generation, these emerging leaders noted, include respecting diversity and multiculturalism. The millennials also seem to have their fair share of the idealism for creating a more just society. They are outspoken in their quest for social justice and are willing to question authority. Another strength is being savvy about technology, including computers, cell phones, and other high-speed forms of communication. As a result, communication for millennials is virtually instantaneous, certainly much faster than it was for previous generations. Communications technology may have much to do with the expectation of instant gratification that some bemoaned in

their generation. One also noted a decline in personal communication skills. There was ambivalence in these various self-assessments. The Matriarch's comments were typical:

My generation has its weaknesses, as well as its strengths. Inspiring my generation to better themselves is the key to constructive change. We are definitely a lot more conscientious about the environment and access technology to a greater degree than other generations. People have also become lazy and expect everything to be automatic and instantaneous. My generation needs role models to help us understand our weaknesses and strengths to help us to become stronger leaders. They can guide us so that weaknesses can become strengths.

(M/I/10)

These emerging millennial leaders made some harsh criticisms of their peers, perhaps because they held themselves to such highly idealistic standards for serving their organizations and the community effectively. They judged many in their generation to be apathetic. As the Butterfly commented,

Sometimes I feel [as if] we just don't care, and that scares me. I wish I had grown up during the civil rights movement [of the 1960s] because everyone seemed so passionate. . . . There is so much going on in our world now, [but] I feel that sometimes our generation is not as involved. I do not think [that] they understand the significance [of their inaction]. They are just like, "Let me play a video game and live in a fantasy world." There is war, and we have to try to make a difference by getting involved. I wish that there were major leaders [as] in the past to inspire everybody. What inspires my generation? We have not been inspired by great leaders. What is our world going to come to if we are not

inspired? There is so much going on today, [yet] my generation is sometimes so nonchalant. (B/I/9)

The Butterfly saw this apathy as a lack of inspiration, suggesting that many in her age cohort are passive, as if waiting for a dynamic leader to function as the spark that ignites them:

What scares me about our generation is that we are not always as inspired as I would like to see. Inspiration is critical. Some people are not involved in community service. I do not know [whether] it is because they have not been around certain leaders. Some members of our generation are not motivated to contribute. I look back to the civil rights movement [in which] all these amazing changes took place, and I feel [as if] our generation expects someone else to take care of matters. (A/F/12). I just feel that many in our generation are not inspired to contribute to their communities. Many people would rather play video games than to get involved in community service. (B/F/13)

The Butterfly's view of the issue of inspiration (or the lack of it) within her generation was not monolithic throughout participant comments. The Guardian Angel took the opposite tack:

As long as you are authentic, I find that encouraging about our generation. It is a matter of perspective. Our generation does not lack inspiration. Right now [2008] in this country, for the first time a minority [Obama] and a female [Clinton] have the potential to be president. That is huge. To see the change that we are going through right now as a female and as a minority in this country with our generation itself is motivating. It is hard for us as a generation because we are

experiencing change. . . . I have to be modern as a parent, but I also have to teach my son to be respectful of others and to teach him the values that my parents taught me while being different because I do not live in the same society that they grew up in. (G/F/12)

The Swan also cautioned against painting all millennials with a broad brush as being apathetic. She remarked, “I have been involved in different campus organizations, and I have found our generation to be extremely diverse and eclectic. I noticed that some students are really involved, [while others] are less connected” (S/F/13). Lack of inspiration was therefore not a unanimous verdict for millennials among these six emerging leaders. However, the six did have other criticisms of their age cohort. The Matriarch faulted millennials for their lack of a strong work ethic:

My generation is not where it should be because of a lack of a work ethic. They see someone go from rags to riches, yet they do not want to work hard. Some of our social services have made it easy for us. If you do not have a job or if you have 10 kids, you get assistance. Our children are going to become dependent because of a lack of responsibility. (M/I/10)

“The ability to connect with people throughout the world is valuable, yet we sometimes do not develop more intense relationships because of the distractions of technology. I connect with others through technology because it allows me to network globally.”

The Swan (S/I/8)

Communications technology elicited great ambivalence from these emerging millennial leaders. The Cheerleader commented that communications technology, for all its advantages, should never supersede direct personal interactions:

Our generation communicates differently and quickly. We are connected technologically, and we can organize important events in moments.

Communication is instantaneous through e-mail, text messaging, and other means.

By no means should technology replace interpersonal communications; it should facilitate our efforts. I incorporate technology and demonstrate the benefits that it can bring to our organization. Some from older generations are intimidated by [its] complexities. I want to demonstrate that computers and the Internet can make education more current and vibrant. (C/J/4)

The Swan concurred in seeing both advantages and disadvantages to her generation's heavy reliance upon the Internet and other forms of communication made possible by current technology:

Our generation has focused on relationships through interaction based on technology, such as Facebook and MySpace. It can be constructive if people use it as a network for positive change and not as a means of wasting time and as a way to escape reality. Technology is good because you are connected, yet it is informal and sometimes deceptive and can prevent us as a generation from getting involved in our community. (S/I/8)

The Diplomat's assessment of millennials' communication skills was positive, yet she also shared the ambivalence about technological forms of communication. She said,

We are very effective communicators. . . . We are creative in communicating through text messaging and e-mail in a way that can also hinder us. . . . If you are always text messaging or e-mailing people, then maybe your [oral] communication skills may not be refined. I see that as a problem for our

generation. . . . Personal relationships can suffer. . . . We are impatient because we always expect an immediate response. (D/I/7)

This trait of impatience can also extend to a sense of entitlement and a desire for instant gratification. The Diplomat noted, “We want immediate gratification in a lot of ways. We want to get what we want when we want it and don’t think that we should have to wait” (D/C/1).

The Diplomat dwelled upon personal relationships and how technology has impinged upon them:

Building personal relationships is critical. One of the more negative things about our generation is that we are too reliant on technology. Sometimes, just directly interacting with people [with whom] you are working helps us to feel more comfortable instead of just sending out an e-mail or text message. We all have heard about bosses who lay employees off via e-mail. . . . There is a time and a place for technology, but forming personal relationships is better than relying on technology alone as a primary means of interaction. (D/F/5)

“Our generation is technically savvy, and we expect instant gratification. I think [that] this is good and it is bad because you can make a greater impact with technology, but we can also lose that personal touch that can instill passion. If we lose our passion as a generation, our society will suffer.”

The Matriarch (M/F/12)

Many of the emerging leaders’ reflections on themselves as leaders centered on their own youth. A particular paradox for them was to be in a position of power over someone else old enough to be their parent or grandparent. They had mixed feelings about the older generations (generally admiring the 1960s, while viewing the past few

decades as a wasteland that produced no inspirational leaders). The Diplomat's comment about another generation was reflective of this concern:

I am disappointed in my parents' generation because of the societal decay over the past 20 years. We don't have many positive role models, [but] we have passion to reverse some of the negativity in our society. I [hope that] a lot of positive role models will start emerging from our generation. (D/F/13)

Perhaps attitudes about one's age have been moving in the direction of greater acceptance of diversity, but some of these emerging leaders seemed self-conscious about their youth. The Swan remarked, "We are a unique generation. Older generations are more traditional. Some people are jealous because you hold a leadership position. They have difficulty accepting that you are younger and are given so much responsibility" (S/F/13). As the Matriarch confided,

The generations before us are becoming more accepting of younger leaders, [but] I do not reveal my age at work because I think that [my age] obstructs other people's ability to see my leadership talents. Many people will not accept someone as young as I am in a leadership role. I have more difficulties with the youth because they are intimidated and reluctant to change, but I am not overbearing. I always use kindness to encourage others to accept me as a leader. Once you establish a reputation built on confidence and competence, people do not mind your age. (M/I/4)

Like the Matriarch, the Guardian Angel seemed self-conscious about her relative youth. However, she counterbalanced the skepticism that she might otherwise encounter

from older coworkers by showing her elders respect, a tactic that perhaps unsurprisingly helped to win them over:

I am normally the youngest one in the groups that I work with, and they see me as very young, but I think how respectful you are is important for them to accept you as a leader. Some people are not accustomed to seeing such young leaders. I go to schools, and some teachers and principals look at me and are intimidated because I could be their daughter. One teacher who is about to retire told me, “You are as young as my granddaughter.” People do not expect to see such young leaders. (G/F/13)

The Guardian Angel eschewed discrimination based on age and seemed philosophical about the differences between people of various generations. She said that she had learned to interact with and to respect people of all ages, while being mindful of generational differences and becoming skillful at adjusting to them. Although it is totally acceptable to be up-to-date about the latest trends, it is also crucial to show respect for and to learn from the values of the older generations. She used marriage as an example of differences in attitudes between generations. Regarding older generations, she said:

We can benefit from their experience and wisdom. I look at my parents’ generation. [For people in that generation], marriage is extremely important, [but] now it is more acceptable not to get married and to move in with who[m]ever you want. My parents’ generation it is still trying to understand and adjust to societal changes. (G/I/6)

For leaders, showing understanding and respect for all people, regardless of age, is important.

You can be modern while valuing tradition and your roots, which make you the person that you are. You have to be open to change because you need to avoid being stagnant. Other generations are adapting [successfully] to change. I see that with my parents because they are also breaking barriers. (G/I/6)

The different generations can learn from one another. The Guardian Angel observed this taking place in her own life: “I learn daily from my son, my younger sister, and my parents, who represent different generations. Learning is taking place everywhere. You have to embrace it. Leaders gain knowledge even through what some may deem insignificant events” (G/C/1).

“As a leader, you have to expand your ability to adjust to different environments and people’s ideas, especially in our generation because we are experiencing significant change. We are experiencing change in our families, in our communities, and in our world. We are modern leaders trying to adjust to a changing society, always trying to consider other generations’ values, different ways of thinking, and multiple points of views.”

The Guardian Angel (G/C/1)

These emerging millennial leaders were aware of the rapid pace at which the society around them is changing, and they wished to be at the forefront of these changes. One cited as evidence of societal change (this during the presidential primary season of 2008) the fact that “a minority [Obama] and a female [Clinton]” had the chance to become president. The fact that the “minority” candidate did become president seems to have much to do with the support that he received from millennials, whose involvement in his campaign was notable.

“Our generation is extremely accepting. We embrace diversity, and our lifestyles are completely different from other generations. We are going to change the cultural and political landscape in this country and around the world.”

The Butterfly (B/F/14)

These emerging leaders seemed excited about their role in shepherding changes in society that they viewed as desirable, and they credited millennials with the strengths needed to effect these changes. As the Matriarch proclaimed, “Our generation is outspoken and questions expectations. My director could be my father; most employees could be my parents. Their generation does not question authority. Our generation has greater demands in the workforce” (M/F/13).

Confidence was one of the strengths that these emerging leaders ascribed to their generation. The Cheerleader credited the parents of millennials with creating the foundation upon which they could exercise their leadership styles:

We had a stable foundation and structure because of our parents. Their support has a lot to do with our confidence and strength. Our parents brought us up telling us that we could do anything, and the educational system gave us the encouragement and resources to believe that we could do anything we put our heart into. You are free to worship as you please, and your spirituality is a choice.

We are nourished, we are educated, and we are fearless as a generation. (C/I/6)

“My generation is fearless; we are outgoing, educated, and wise. We go out into the world to explore. We take risks. When we make mistakes, we try again. We are very resilient, and we have dreams.”

The Cheerleader (C/I/6)

Multiculturalism and diversity have become such commonplace concepts that it is easy to lose sight of the ethical principles that make honoring them so important. The Cheerleader highlighted the importance of the values of compassion and kindness in dealing with people from diverse backgrounds:

I hope that my leadership leads to more compassion and kindness. I strive to be more accepting of others because there are still barriers that must be overcome. People are not always accepting of others or open-minded about differences. I hope that my leadership fosters acceptance and compassion, a sense of harmony.

(C/I/6)

“I believe that leaders emerge when there is a particular need within a particular group or community and their effectiveness is determined by how well they produce results or enact change. . . . There are many critical issues at this time that require our generation to rise to the challenge of leadership globally.”

The Diplomat (D/C/1)

According to the participants, the millennial generation will insist upon greater inclusion in leadership positions of women and other minorities that have traditionally been underrepresented in positions of power. They will push for multiculturalism and respect for diversity. They will continue to embrace state-of-the-art communications technology, which has already had a big impact on how they live their lives and view the world. Some of the criticisms that the participants had of their peers may be largely a product of their youth, so some of these traits may shift as this age cohort grows older.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the themes that emerged from an exploration of the various research questions. The findings resulted in the following themes: **embracing differences, cultivating relationships, fostering collaboration, overcoming adversity, pursuing dreams, becoming pillars of inspiration, acquiring knowledge, engaging in reflection, striving for growth, pursuing civic engagement, building capacity, and envisioning millennial contributions.** All of these emerging leaders had a strong sense of social justice and a vision for improving conditions within their organizations and in

the communities that they served. These emerging leaders placed a premium on collaborative leadership and teamwork. Their quest to make a difference in society sustained them through their struggles with resistance to change. The next chapter presents the summary, conclusions, and implications of this research study.



“The more reflective and open we are to the perspectives of others, the richer our imagination of alternative contexts for understanding will be.”

JACK MEZIROW (2000, p. 20)

Chapter V: Summary, Discussion, and Implications

This dissertation considered the major theories from the literature related to leadership, transformational learning, organizational learning, and community building as a framework for this research regarding emerging millennial leaders. Chapter IV presented the findings from the six case studies related to emerging millennial leaders who had completed a collegiate leadership development program at a major research institution. That chapter examined how they defined and enacted their leadership styles. The findings were drawn from an analysis of the data collected from in-depth individual interviews, journals, artifacts in the form of leadership creeds presented by each participant, and a focus group that involved all six emerging leaders.

Chapter IV presented the study's findings in response to the primary and secondary research questions. The 12 themes that emerged were: **embracing differences, cultivating relationships, fostering collaboration, overcoming adversity, pursuing dreams, becoming pillars of inspiration, acquiring knowledge, engaging in reflection, striving for growth, pursuing civic engagement, building capacity, and envisioning millennial contributions.**

This chapter provides an overview of the participants, a summary of the findings, a discussion of those findings in relation to the literature, implications, and recommendations, as well as suggestions for further research.

Research Questions and Purpose of Chapter

The primary research question of this study was:

- How do emerging leaders from a variety of organizations and community groups define and enact their leadership styles?

The secondary research questions of this study were:

- How do various life experiences and the actions of others influence emerging organizational and community leaders?
- How do various learning opportunities affect emerging organizational and community leaders?
- How is emergent organizational and community leadership fostered through a collegiate leadership development program?

The purpose of this chapter is to further consider these four questions and to discuss the significance of understanding emerging millennial leaders. This chapter does not presume to generalize about all emerging millennial leaders. Instead, it offers observations and insights drawn from the rich data on the six leaders who participated in the research.

Research Participants

The six emerging leaders shared a passion to affect the lives of others positively and to change society for the better. They had a strong sense of social justice, a desire to encourage those whose voices have been silenced to speak out, and to include those who have been excluded as active members of communities. This vision of what society should and could be empowered them to overcome adversity and to pursue constructive organizational and community development and transformation. The sacrifices of the emerging leaders included in this study are inspiring because they came from the realization that we often feel alone in our actions and count on the satisfaction of helping others to motivate us. These leaders did not hesitate to commit themselves to shared goals. They understood that leaders feel fearful and thus vulnerable in their desire to

encourage change. Their strength and perseverance stemmed from their tremendous concern for others and the conviction that their efforts were warranted because of the pressing need to act to benefit society through their leadership roles. Awareness of self and others was at the core of this study. Their understanding and respect for themselves and others was crucial to the sense of commitment that these emerging leaders had about the influence that they could have on organizational and community development.

The pseudonyms used in this research study for each of the six participants were drawn from metaphors that surfaced in their reflections upon leadership. These six emerging millennial leaders have been referred to in this study as the Butterfly, the Cheerleader, the Diplomat, the Guardian Angel, the Matriarch, and the Swan.

The Butterfly

The metaphor of the butterfly was suggested by the participant, who said, “Like a butterfly, a strong leader is one who can adapt” (B/J/6). Adaptability is a value that the Butterfly prized in the process of personal growth and organizational transformation. The Butterfly plunged into initiating change, valuing strength and likening a leader to a force of nature.

The Cheerleader

The metaphor of the cheerleader was taken from this participant’s self-description of enthusiasm in supporting others. The leader, she thought, should demonstrate self-mastery while encouraging others to achieve their full potential. The Cheerleader held high expectations for self and others. She showed respect and willingness to praise others.

The Diplomat

A strong work ethic and diplomacy were prized by the Diplomat, who also valued listening carefully to others and respecting them while building consensus. The Diplomat valued growth through taking on challenges. The Diplomat believed that leadership could be realized by everyone regardless of his or her particular position within an organization or community.

The Guardian Angel

The Guardian Angel saw herself as a protector and spokesperson for others. The Guardian Angel had empathy for those who must master a new environment. She valued compassion and understanding. She showed strength and determination in how she moved things forward to completion to attain a goal. The Guardian Angel valued maturity and constantly pursued knowledge.

The Matriarch

The Matriarch thought that values and morals should be manifested in honesty and integrity. The Matriarch stressed the importance of family and education in forming character and values. The leader should have empathy for those less fortunate. Above all, the Matriarch prized loyalty.

The Swan

Personal growth was necessary for the Swan to serve as a role model to others. Authenticity, compassion, and humility were key values to the Swan. The Swan stressed the importance of equality, respect for others, and a passionate commitment to one's goals.

Summary of Findings

Embracing Differences

Diversity and multiculturalism were not abstractions for these emerging millennial leaders. They had had many experiences of interacting with others from different backgrounds, ethnicities, races, cultures, ages, religions, and lifestyles. Some had the personal experience of being an immigrant or marrying someone from another part of the world. Even when such differences caused hardship, these emerging leaders valued and prized diversity. All saw this as a core value in their approach to leadership, especially given the increasing diversity in organizations and communities.

Cultivating Relationships

The participants valued other people and saw it as the leader's responsibility to empower others and to help them realize their full potential. They saw this occurring through cultivating relationships, networking, and teambuilding. Mentoring was one of the special relationships that required cultivation. However, even when not mentoring others, these leaders felt that it was important to foster honesty and trust so that it was possible for everyone to express alternative perspectives and to take risks.

Fostering Collaboration

These six emerging millennial leaders felt comfortable working in groups or teams, which is consistent with the general trends for their age cohort, as discussed in the generational overview provided in Chapter II. All of them valued a collaborative style of leadership, which is something that had been emphasized in the collegiate leadership development program that all of the participants had completed. Making others feel valued and important, in part through praise, encouragement, and other positive feedback,

was important to the six emerging leaders. Collaboration requires a realistic appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of others, with the leader assuming some responsibility for helping others improve their skills. Collaboration was also fostered through building a shared vision, while getting others to share responsibility for achieving goals.

Overcoming Adversity

All of the participants had faced challenges, such as having to learn another language or being rejected the first time around while seeking admission to college. Some had seen a parent or role model survive cancer or leave a marriage after suffering domestic abuse. These difficulties had helped instill in these emerging leaders perseverance and a desire to help others overcome obstacles, which rested in part on compassion for others who have faced disappointment, discrimination, and failure. Practical advantages of overcoming adversity included the survival skills that they developed, for example through experiencing the crucial benefits of having a strong support network.

Pursuing Dreams

Bringing dreams into reality takes passion and perseverance. Pursuing dreams involves both a mental vision of the desired goal and an unquenchable emotional yearning to do whatever it takes. All the participants saw the leader as someone who had a dream and a passion for making it a reality, which they believed could inspire others to pursue their dreams and persevere, despite obstacles and setbacks.

Becoming Pillars of Inspiration

Charisma has long been recognized in famous leaders who have inspired others. However, leaders who walk far from the spotlight can be pillars of inspiration too. For

these emerging leaders, championing the rights of the underprivileged and giving voice to those who have been silenced was imperative. These emerging leaders had been inspired by those who stood up for the powerless. Leaders should be able to work well with people from many different backgrounds, as many different groups of people have faced challenges and disadvantages. Inspiration can arise in interpersonal settings, as well as in an eloquent speech to a gathered multitude. In these smaller, more personal encounters, the inspiration may rest more on a personal connection than eloquence.

Acquiring Knowledge

All six of the emerging millennial leaders valued learning, both through formal education and through what they could learn from their lived experience. Some had faced grave obstacles on the path to learning, such as needing to acquire language proficiency or facing the daunting cost of earning a college degree. As leaders learn, they can impart knowledge to others. One leadership skill is helping others to acquire knowledge to build their aptitudes and abilities.

Engaging in Reflection

Although all six of these emerging millennial leaders might be described as take-charge types, ever willing to plunge in and forge ahead, they also realized the value of pulling back from the fray to engage in reflection. This process of reflection concerned personal goals, as well as organizational objectives. Reflection also involves pondering the responses of others, not only when they respond as anticipated, but perhaps even more crucially when they fail to respond as desired. Reflection hinges on experience, the basis for what is digested in the process of reflecting. Challenges can generate insights and

personal growth with reflection. Effective leaders always strive to understand themselves and others more deeply, which occurs through ongoing reflection.

Striving for Growth

One of the paradoxes of growth is that it can be the result of a setback, crisis, or disorienting dilemma, which can strengthen resolve to make substantive changes. Failure and mistakes can teach valuable lessons and spur growth. These emerging leaders believed that assuming major responsibilities early in life prepared them for their subsequent responsibilities and instilled in them a desire for perennial growth. These emerging millennial leaders were determined to master their leadership skills on an ongoing basis.

Pursuing Civic Engagement

Community service was something that the participants valued and found fulfilling. This desire to serve the community stemmed from passionate convictions about human rights, social justice, and the moral obligation to respect everyone. These emerging leaders recognized deep-seated social problems that have been linked with poverty and discrimination. They felt that leaders must address not only overwhelming problems, such as hunger and mental illness, but also more prevalent ones, such as daily challenges that students experience in pursuing education. Addressing social problems and pursuing civic engagement require sensitivity to the needs of others. Providing community service was an arena in which these emerging leaders honed their leadership skills.

Building Capacity

To transform society and to bring about the improvements in people's lives that these emerging leaders wish to see occur, they realized that they had to empower others. Part of how they envisioned enacting their leadership was through helping others to recognize their inherent abilities and to develop their skills. This involved strengthening collaborative partnerships and keeping in touch with the needs and desires of various constituencies. They wanted to build not only individual capacity in service to others, but also organizational capacity in service of others. They recognized that a generalized resistance to change was an impediment to building capacity, so they saw that leadership required patience and persistence. Building capacity often involved transforming personal views, as well as organizational and community cultures.

Envisioning Millennial Contributions

The theme of envisioning millennial contributions emerged from the participants' reflections upon their age cohort or generation, which has variously been dubbed generation Y or the millennial generation. Their view of their generation ran the gamut from high praise ("very wise," "idealistic," and "well-educated") to harsh criticism ("self-indulgent," "apathetic," and "undisciplined"). Perceived strengths included respecting diversity and idealism concerning social justice.

For these six millennial leaders, mastery of technology cut both ways (technologically "savvy," but also a tendency to be easily distracted and sometimes deficient in interpersonal communication skills). They believed that their generation would surf the wave of rapid social change, helping make racism and sexism recede into the past. One challenge was the growing expectation of instant gratification that they

have come to expect through technology, such as cell phones, text messages, e-mail, and other developing communications. They seemed to see themselves as faced with the challenge that some worthwhile changes take great sacrifice and perseverance. They found themselves willing to persevere and sacrifice, for years if needed, to bring about the social change and transformation that they envision.

Discussion

An exploration of leadership is valuable in the quest to expand the understanding of opportunities to develop a shared vision, a prime goal of the emerging leaders in this study. Leadership concepts put forth by the research participants emphasized organizational and community partnerships. Collaboration, communication, compassion, trust, and strategic direction, they argued, are essential to bring people together for shared leadership opportunities. These principles are prominent in organizational and community development and can yield positive change through greater attention to the climate and culture of organizations and communities. The participants felt that leadership thrives with authenticity, which keeps leaders aware of the importance of humility and integrity. Transformation is possible for organizations and communities, and certain events may lead to a change in direction.

Transforming Organizations and Communities

Community and organizational transformation is realized through individuals who work as a team, inspired by collective energy and talents. This was something that the participants believed, seeing their leadership as effective only to the extent that they empowered those whom they led. Leaders must search for the subtle messages that are before them and use these to benefit those they serve. Leaders' experiences gave them

the opportunity to expand their abilities by integrating knowledge and experience so that they might support others even more.

Meaningful transformation can occur when individuals come together collectively to cultivate learning and to sculpt constructive change. This is possible when individuals are authentically concerned for others as part of a community and are dedicated to collaborative efforts because of their commitment to serve. The sincerity of the participants' desire to serve others seemed apparent from their comments. This desire to serve was tied to the goal of transforming organizations and communities to be more responsive to the needs of their constituencies. It is through connection with others that people build on their understanding through an array of perspectives (Daloz, 1999; Mezirow, 2000).

Constructive Change and Networking

John Kotter (1996) contributed to the critical dialogue in the organizational development and transformation arena with his international bestseller *Leading Change*. Kotter's collaborative work with Dan Cohen has been significant to this evolving field because the authors presented an array of interesting stories that illuminated the challenges inherent in large-scale change efforts. Together, in *The Heart of Change*, Kotter and Cohen (2002) explored the intricacies of how positive change is realized through their interviews with more than 100 organizations that were in the midst of change initiatives. They addressed the importance of changing behavior by making people *feel* differently instead of having them only *think* differently. This approach was consistent with the views of the study participants, who valued the emotional connection with others and showed a heartfelt commitment to issues of social justice. The essence of

The Heart of Change is that leaders should appeal to people's hearts instead of just their minds so that organizations may overcome the obstacles that prevent them from achieving valuable change and transformation.

Kotter and Cohen (2002) argued that people change more when they are “shown a truth” that appeals to their feelings than when they are “given analysis” that is intended to influence their thinking. They highlighted changing behavior, rather than strategy, systems, or culture, as the greatest challenge to generating significant shifts. The vast collection of interviews presented throughout *The Heart of Change* offered evidence that the most successful organizations have learned how to overcome resistance to change. The authors presented a “see–feel–change” approach that they claimed was more powerful than an “analysis–think–change” approach to change.

Through exploring various perspectives, the participants understood that facilitating constructive change is complex and that establishing strong organizational and community partnerships required them to honor key principles and to embrace different viewpoints through a variety of networks. Intrinsic connections exist between personal and shared experiences and perspectives, between organizational learning and change, and between community engagement and development. The sense of calling that the participants felt for leadership sustained them through the challenges of working with people with divergent agendas.

Authenticity and Strength

Each of the six emerging millennial leaders who participated in this research study had a passion for leadership that was based on a sense of authenticity. This was rooted in a vision for who a leader could be and how a leader could affect others and influence

society. These emerging leaders had drawn inspiration from previous leaders, whether these leaders were famous or obscure. These emerging leaders had faced personal hardships, disappointments, and setbacks, and they had drawn strength from the tenacity of others who had also faced and overcome obstacles. They had learned from their own mistakes, as well as the mistakes of others, such as a supervisor whose style of leadership created conflict. The participants all maintained a sense of pragmatism and worked toward a shared vision with a diversity of stakeholders.

Diversity and Discovery

Kolodny (2000) promoted a community of learners and leaders coming together through diverse constituencies, something important due to the increasing demographic and socioeconomic diversity of contemporary society. The participants viewed this diversity as a significant positive consideration in their approach to leadership. Learning through dialogue motivates leaders to develop their own style. Interaction inspires leaders to serve their communities through effective teamwork.

The participants in this study realized that their experiences could serve as the impetus for positive change, and their continuous exploration and discoveries helped them to understand diverse perspectives and better serve their organizations and their communities through dialogue and critical reflection (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Bohm, 1998; Brookfield, 1987). Discovering and understanding the experiences of others from diverse backgrounds motivated them to pursue organizational development and community engagement with greater empathy and compassion, leading to a clearer vision.

Organizational and community leaders should value collaboration and shared vision to foster positive change in a democratic society (Brookfield & Preskill, 1999;

Fullan, 2001). Involvement in collaborative endeavors can lead to organizational and transformational learning. This occurs by engaging individuals from diverse perspectives in partnerships as a cohesive community. Significant personal growth takes place when people come together through organizations and communities to learn collaboratively while pursuing positive transformation. The participants commented upon this when reflecting on the leadership development program, their subsequent activities, and their process of discovery.

Creativity and Visioning

The principles of collaboration, communication, compassion, and trust are essential to enhance learning and to facilitate creativity. The participants expressed the belief that organizational and community transformation is realized through the creative contributions of various members who work as a team, inspired by the collective energy and talents of team members.

Organizational learning and capacity building rest upon appreciating and nurturing human capital. Organizations must contribute to the social and economic fabric of the greater community (Morgan, 1998). Embracing different perspectives to allow for creativity is inspired by shared learning and teamwork (Brookfield, 1987; Fullan, 2001). Strategies to enhance learning must include a vision and commitment to empowering organizational and community members as a collective.

The study has highlighted visioning, which had been realized through personal and group transformation, organizational development, and community building. The participants in this study embraced a shared vision because they realized that it could result in personal transformation, team building, and community engagement. Visioning

is one way to set a clear direction for an organization. When people come together to plan improvements, visioning results in better mutual understanding and improved interpersonal relationships. Team building can be integral to this process. Leaders can set the stage for implementing this change. The emerging leaders in this study placed a high value on visioning.

Visioning is a key principle for individual learning, as well as for creating enduring connections within organizations and communities. Groups of people can come together to advance a collective promise that is strengthened through interaction, respect, and collaboration in developmental and transformative learning environments. The intricacies of group interaction and teamwork can create and form a collective vision for constructive organizational change and community. Visioning can lead to personal, organizational, and community learning, as well as transformation.

The participants facilitated group connections for collaborative learning to pursue transformation. Developing a clearer vision and mission, they realized, was crucial to develop a framework for moving forward with strategies for constructive change. Groups of people can come together, overcoming structural barriers, through organizations and communities to further a collective promise that is strengthened through interaction, collaboration, and respect in positive and structured environments.

Connectivity and Technology

The six emerging leaders in this study recognized the importance of developing a consciousness that technology is inextricably connected to organizational dynamics and societal transformation. They were quite self-conscious about this in their own lives and the lives of their peers. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) introduced asset-based

community development as a coherent strategy for building community capacity. They proposed that an asset-based approach leads to empowered communities that are more successful at developing capacity and securing critical resources. Our scientific aptitude could serve as an important foundation for facilitating collaboration and fostering a shared vision by incorporating technology to develop a networked society (Castells, 1996).

Technology offers vast potential to organizations that are actively pursuing new strategic directions. Communications become more rapid, while typically being less formal and less hierarchical. This has huge implications for the type of teamwork and group involvement favored by the participants in this study. Farrell and Holkner (2002) claimed that organizations become more open from two developments. First, new initiatives emerge in the management of technology that is underpinned by new infrastructures and initiatives (p. 6). Second, new networks promote visions of technical change. These networks challenge existing cultural and institutional structures (p. 6). Organizational knowledge represents a conscious means for society to cope with dilemmas in steering technology development.

Farrell and Holkner (2002) claimed that the “preferred way of dealing with technology development consists of addressing organizations as open systems” (p. 9). They proposed that technology contributes to flexibility and momentum. They interpreted technologies along two lines of comparison. The first dimension was “provided by organizational choices and intentions for technology” (p. 9). The second dimension “consists of the relation between the actors of technology and the emergent institutional concerns and the institutionalization of collective social and cultural

concerns” (p. 10). Such organizational dimensions relate technology to the ideas garnered through the influence of social groups (Narayan & Woolcock, 2000).

An implication of technology is that organization-generated communications must be in tune with the constituent groups and responsive to their points of view, as authoritarian messages or messages perceived as being offensive can be undermined and subverted through the rapid-fire forms of communication available through contemporary technology. In other words, the substance of the message must be acceptable to the recipients, which is in no sense an automatic byproduct of the means of delivery of the message, a point not lost on totalitarian or authoritarian political regimes in various foreign countries.

Organizations are composed of technology cultures with supporting ideologies (Pinkett, 2000). Communities engage in developing methods to support the societal criticism of technology development through new methods and modes of interpretation (Pinkett; Robinson, 1995). Therefore, intellectual debate and cultural criticism of technology are important (Farrell & Holkner, 2002). The overall impact of such dialogue on society depends on varying political interests and the power of interactive groups (Schein, 2005). The emerging leaders in this study, members of the millennial generation, were savvy about technology as a source of protest, parody, and ridicule of messages that they interpreted as disingenuous, especially if caught on videotape, audiotape, or digital media. Such messages can linger on the Internet indefinitely, as many leaders, celebrities, and other public figures have come to realize.

Social Constructionism and Paradigm Shifts

The connection between science, technology, and society implies a social-constructionist approach—the recognition that “the terms in which the world is understood are social artifacts, products of historically situated interchanges among people” (Gergen & Gergen, 2003, p. 15). The development of emerging technology leads to constant alterations to existing bodies of knowledge that ultimately produce dramatic paradigm shifts that steer people in profound new directions (Kuhn, 2003). In a sense, the collective body of knowledge has become interactive, like the technology through which it is compiled, accessed, and revised. Only through openness to technological applications are people able to fully understand possibilities, as well as to harness their capabilities, so that they may pursue greater opportunities through awareness and adaptability. Technology can serve as an influential means for facilitating paradigm shifts. The emerging leaders in this study took a proactive approach to shifting organizational paradigms, and they were more than willing to employ technology to that end.

A useful construct for organizational learning is the paradigm shift, a concept developed by Thomas Kuhn (2003). A paradigm shift signifies a radical reorganization of knowledge and ways of conceiving of reality. An example of a paradigm shift occurred in physics when the Newtonian view of physics was superseded by Einstein’s theory of relativity. The ongoing practice and development of inquiry leads to constant alterations to the existing body of knowledge and could ultimately lead to dramatic paradigm shifts that would steer the domain of organization and community development and transformation theory in profound new directions (Kuhn).

Only through openness to change can leaders fully harness capabilities so that they might pursue greater opportunities for transformation in their organizations and communities through greater awareness and adaptability. Without such openness, leaders are likely to see only what fits in with their existing paradigms. As Kuhn (2003) noted, “A paradigm can . . . insulate the community from those socially important problems that are not reducible to the puzzle form because they cannot be stated in terms of the conceptual and instrumental tools [that] the paradigm supplies” (p. 8). The problem, Kuhn explained, is that “professionalization leads to an immense restriction of vision and to a considerable resistance to paradigm change” (p. 9). These six emerging millennial leaders realized that some other members of their generation might underestimate the power of this resistance and how deeply entrenched such resistance can be. They themselves seemed prepared for the long haul in shifting paradigms, while lamenting what they perceived as unrealistic expectations held by many in their generation for rapid transformation.

Gergen and Gergen (2003) explored the possibility of developing a framework for theoretical constructionism or at least a basis for constructionist intuition. According to Gergen and Gergen, “such a constructionist intuition would be founded partly on a merging of ideas of symbols of technology, which would provide a framework for social actions, a sort of sociological bedrock” (p. 43). The other part of a constructionist basis for science and technology would be a combination of ideas of construction and deconstruction. Farrell and Holkner (2002) claimed that this theoretical foundation leads to the view that things do not exist except through the processes of construction,

including social processes. Social constructionism provides a framework for describing and employing technology that leads to organizational and community development.

The participants seemed well-aware of the practical implications of the concept of *constructionism* and of the significance of paradigm shifts. This was reflected in their comments about leadership and how they envisioned themselves as leaders. Their role models as inspirational leaders, including the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Mohandas Gandhi ushered in paradigm shifts by constructing new ways of envisioning society and human interactions. They saw it as incumbent upon the leader to take charge of shaping the message to support paradigms that favor human empowerment and social justice. The concept of social constructionism is inextricably linked with the concept of the paradigm shift, and one of the roles of the transformational leader is to harness the power of social construction to bring about a paradigm shift.

Community Building and Social Justice

People are constantly learning and changing through shared experiences, and, as a result, are better prepared to deal with the uncertainties and challenges in a constantly changing environment. Leaders need to channel this potential for change and transformation to lead to organizational learning, through harnessing the potential power of such things as paradigm shifts. One of the paradigm shifts embraced by these emerging millennial leaders and others of their generation is respect for people from different backgrounds in an increasingly multicultural and demographically diverse society.

Community building rests upon building capacity through group interaction, an activity to which the participants in this study gave a great deal of attention.

Collaborative learning plays a role in this, allowing leaders and other participants position themselves to deal with a variety of challenges in community settings. Team-based learning provides an opportunity for leaders to engage passionately with others to develop important ideas and directions. The emerging leaders of organizations in this study realized the importance of collaborative learning when striving for positive transformation. Increased dialogue between individuals and groups from varied perspectives, the participants noted, was vital to promote understanding, connections, and collaboration. Through mutual trust and cooperation, leaders can facilitate networks to address challenges in the community.

As organizational and community leaders, the participants in this study understood the significance of overcoming barriers that could hinder learning and the capacity to achieve goals. Awareness of self and self-reflection were at the core of their comments, surrounded by key principles of leadership that illustrated the influence that leaders can have as individuals on organizational and community change. Further research that specifically explores the implicit connection of participatory communication and collaborative inquiry with community building could contribute to this sparse domain of knowledge. The research highlighted capacity building both within organizations and in building bridges to the community.

Empowerment and Teamwork

It is necessary for organizations to establish empowering structures, policies, and practices while remaining sensitive to the reaction of individuals to various leadership practices. Organizations that afford individual latitude and provide opportunities for

group collaboration are best positioned to gain from the enthusiasm of satisfied teams that are fully committed because they are empowered.

Siebert et al. (2004) emphasized the importance of attending to individual-level psychological factors. They explained that empowerment “has roots in such substantive issues as intrinsic motivation, job design, participative decision making, social learning theory, and self-management” (p. 332). Siebert et al. viewed empowering structures and practices as contextual variables that affect individuals’ feelings about empowerment. They elaborated on the empowerment literature that has acknowledged “both a macro perspective that focuses on organizational structures and policies and a micro perspective that focuses on empowerment as intrinsic motivation” (p. 332). The study participants seemed very open to the emphasis that Siebert et al. placed on individual empowerment and intrinsic motivation.

Key organizational practices related to empowerment include information sharing, autonomy through boundaries, and team accountability (Siebert et al., 2004). It is important for leaders to share information with team members. Leaders need to develop “organizational structures and practices that encourage autonomous action, including the development of a clear vision and clarity regarding goals, work procedures, and areas of responsibility”; additionally, leaders should perceive teams as the “locus of decision-making authority and performance accountability in organizations” (p. 333). However, Siebert et al. did not address the specific issue of millennials’ tendency to favor group approaches and whether this might undermine the goal of individual autonomy. In any case, supportive leadership and a collaborative environment are essential for developing a positive organizational climate that facilitates empowerment. Attention should be paid to

the issue of individual autonomy and empowerment as millennials eventually rise to top positions in organizations to see whether their comfort with conformity and group allegiance might impair the objective of individual autonomy and organizational ambidexterity.

Leaders must understand the significance of overcoming structural barriers that can hinder learning and capacity building. Seibert et al. (2004) discovered that organizational structures reflect limited focus on empowerment and have not been adjusted to accommodate many factors associated with entire systems or communities. Empowerment is essential if organizations and communities are to develop structures that fully integrate technology in the process of development. It is critical that organizations and communities provide members with the latitude that they need to further innovation (Fullan, 2001). The willingness to develop individuals and teams through empowered communities allows people to realize greater opportunities for communication and collaboration (Seibert et al.).

Ambidexterity and Dynamic Environments

Organizations should become more ambidextrous to meet the demands prevalent within the dynamic environments in which they exist. Individuals and organizations must strive continuously to become more keenly aware of their surroundings. It is vital that team members realize the importance of embracing flexibility and managing change if they are to guide their organizations toward higher potential. Such ardent awareness and continuous adaptation can lead to an improved focus and more directed energy that could position organizations to achieve greater success.

Gibson and Birkinshaw (2004) described thoroughly the differences between contextual ambidexterity and structural ambidexterity in a manner that highlighted the importance of both structure and context for organizational alignment and development. Prevailing organizational literature has emphasized the value of fostering flexible organizations that are prepared to deal with various environmental demands through compartmentalized or segmented structures. Gibson and Birkinshaw, however, emphasized the value of developing organizations that are built to operate so that all team members are sensitive to change and are empowered to act regardless of their particular expertise or assignment within the organization.

Organizations that are contextually ambidextrous foster creativity and innovation by empowering team members to balance efficiency and flexibility while elevating performance (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004). A decentralized model calls for the interplay of systems so that alignment and adaptability are advanced. Supportive leadership and the development of shared vision are essential to developing a positive organizational climate.

Gibson and Birkinshaw's research lent credibility to the concept of contextual ambidexterity for improving community dynamics. The most successful organizations and vibrant communities are those that are consistently cognizant of change and adapt positively so that they are best aligned with shifting expectations in a turbulent landscape (French & Bell, 1999; French et al., 2005). Strategic structuring can facilitate organizations' ability to attend to the varying demands placed on their communities through a consideration of how various constituencies socially construct their views of reality.

“Envisioning Leadership for a New Millennium: Making the World a Better Place” (see Figure 5.1, below) reflects the key characteristics used by these emerging leaders to affect their partnerships, teams, organizations, and communities. Figure 5.1 summarizes many of the ideas discussed in this chapter.



Figure 5.1. Envisioning Leadership for a New Millennium: Making the World a Better Place

Implications and Recommendations

Keeping the flame alight or keeping the vision alive seemed to be a particular challenge for these young emerging leaders, especially given their view of their generation’s unrealistic expectation for instant gratification, which has been fostered by

technology. However, the challenges that these emerging millennial leaders have already faced seem to have prepared them for the years of struggle that lie ahead. They value working in teams and empowering others. They have recognized the importance of forming and maintaining support groups to get them through difficult challenges in the past, and this is likely to help sustain them as they battle organizational, institutional, societal, and political resistance to change. They may also be armoring themselves against the potential for professional burnout by recognizing the importance of continuous personal growth and transformational learning.

Some of the rewards that mean the most to these emerging leaders are won one person at a time. It seems likely that in battling social inequalities that they will continue to feel renewed and validated each time they support someone. Achieving social justice is a matter of helping individuals make it across the finish line rather than dropping out of the race. Their self-confidence about their leadership abilities seemed strong, along with their belief in their vision of the changes that they would like to see. That self-confidence and that vision should help sustain their drive in the years ahead.

Participants stressed the importance of diversity issues. Many challenges call for thoughtful leadership from stewards of organizations and communities in an increasingly diverse environment. The implications for leaders from this nation's changing demographics are becoming more apparent within a fragmented and divisive political landscape. To deal with these issues, leaders need to encourage dialogue between those with varied perspectives to promote understanding, cooperation, and commitment (Kolodny, 2000).

Leaders will have to make determinations regarding what is best for all of those they serve (Goodchild, Lovell, Hines, & Gill, 1997). Leaders may be pressed to even greater limits in their quest for diversity. Through understanding and collaboration, they should be able to develop strategies to allow organizations to reflect the demographics of the communities that they serve.

To feel confident as leaders, leaders need to think critically and to consider and evaluate differing perspectives thoughtfully (Goodlad, 2001; Zinn, 1998). This critical approach serves leaders when exposed to differing opinions. Shared learning should further develop leaders' confidence so that they are better prepared to deal with the challenges that they will face.

The increasing diversity of contemporary society poses implications for leadership, as these emerging leaders knew. Communities have become increasingly multifaceted. One implication is increased representation from diverse sections of the population in organizations. Leaders may encounter resistance from some quarters when pursuing diversity, requiring them to stand by their convictions to promote access and equity. It will be increasingly important for them to acquire a better understanding of the complicated legal issues that affect them in this regard, such as the changing legislation and rulings on such policies as affirmative action. Leaders will encounter contentious issues that elicit polarized reactions. It is important for leaders to be forthright about their particular value commitments so that they could advocate for silenced voices (Goodlad, 2001; Greene, 1997; Narayan & Woolcock, 2000).

As leaders seek to make progress in an increasingly multicultural society, they face constituencies with different ideas about what constitutes equity and fairness. The

views held by these six emerging millennial leaders seem to be so predominant in their generation that, as they realized, some of the other members of their generation underestimated the forces of resistance to their view of social justice and multiculturalism. Howe and Strauss (2000) noted that the millennial generation is confident and optimistic. Its members are team players who share a sense of collective power. Therefore, they have some key traits that may serve them well in banding together to counter the resistance that they are likely to face from some quarters to their goals of pushing for greater inclusivity and shared leadership. This supports a collective leadership model for all of the emerging leaders that participated in the collegiate leadership development program.

Leaders should consider the implications of their actions when working with diverse groups through connections with multiple constituencies. This is particularly important in a changing environment. Leaders need to become more responsive to the multicultural environment in which organizations now exist. Leaders can be instrumental in an effort to create increased opportunities for all.

Authoritarian, top-down styles of management and supervision rub this cohort the wrong way; they prefer more collaborative forms of leadership, with an emphasis upon group interaction and teamwork. Organizations and communities would do well to harness the idealism and passion of these emerging millennial leaders who hold such a strong commitment to creating a more just and inclusive society.

Future Research

Like other qualitative research, this study was exploratory and suggestive, not projectable or definitive. This research comprised data gathered from six emerging

millennial leaders who had completed a collegiate leadership development program. Future research could explore whether the views of these six millennials were representative of other millennials from other locations. Cultural diversity varies from one location to another, which could affect views of and approaches to leadership. The location in which the research was conducted may have been influenced by the presence of various cultures. This location and the people who live in it may differ from other areas. In any case, accounting for the influence of the cultural mix of a particular area on the participants was beyond the scope of this research, but this may have influenced the attitudes of the participants. The influence of any given area's unique blend of cultures could be the subject of future research.

The fact that these particular findings emerged from an analysis of the data may in part be due to the gender composition of the participants. Another area for future research would be to see how the findings might differ for emerging male leaders as they did for these six emerging female leaders. To what extent were their views and experiences shaped by their gender or by their location? Do females of their generation from other locations envision and enact their leadership styles differently? What about their male age cohorts, both in this part of the country and elsewhere?

One area of research that should be further explored is the emerging paradigm of leadership for organizations known as *leaderful practice*. According to Raelin (2005), leaderful practice constitutes a direct challenge to the conventional view of leadership as "being out in front." Instead, in the 21st-century organization, everyone will need to share the experience of serving as a leader, not sequentially, but concurrently and collectively. In other words, leaders need to coexist at the same time and all together (Raelin). In

addition, each member of an organization will be encouraged to make a unique contribution to its growth, both independently and interdependently with others. In this sense, organizational members will aspire to become fervently collaborative, an impulse derived from their compassion toward other human beings (Raelin). Their well-developed sense of self permits them to develop a deep consideration of others. Is it possible to lead organizations out of trouble through collective or shared leadership?

As all of the study participants were women, it would be interesting to further investigate women and their leadership styles. Gilligan (1982) believed that women come from a caring and moral place while in the capacity of leadership. Women are capable of the highest level of moral thinking and scruple to avoid hurting others, whereas men tend to view moral conflicts as abstract, logical problems concerning rights and rules (Gilligan). Ella Baker (Review, 2004) argued that women in leadership positions would embrace civic involvement. She had a new way of looking at leadership in that she focused on serving disenfranchised communities by: 1. empowering women and girls to be leaders in their communities; 2. helping to build productive and equitable relationships between citizens and public/private institutions; and, 3. providing community organizing training for residents to work for social justice in their own communities and beyond (Payne).

How do millennials differ in their views about leadership from members of other generations? Furthermore, how will their attitudes shift as they age? Future research could include a longitudinal tracking study of their attitudes toward leadership issues. Emerging leaders from a younger generation are a largely untapped area for additional research. Millennial leaders may have beliefs and approaches toward leadership that

differ from those of established leaders. How will the views of this generation change as they age and as society changes in the coming decades?

Conclusion

Experiences can serve as an impetus for change. Continuous exploration and discoveries can help leaders to serve more effectively the organizations and communities that they embrace and value through their leadership. As an emerging researcher, I have grown from my interactions with the participants. Their diverse experiences of discovery and transformation have transformed me. As a result, I shall pursue organizational leadership and community engagement more passionately. Exploring the phenomenon of leadership through the lenses of the participants provided me an opportunity to gain from their reflections. This has not only allowed me to understand my own perspectives better, but also ensured that I have a mirror in which to look for validation as I further develop my views on leadership.

Senge (2000) suggested that leaders deal with issues systemically in our involvement in leadership because of interpersonal interconnectivity and relationships with others in a variety of settings. He used the term *metanoia* (p. 22) to refer to the shift of mind that should occur as people are awakened by their collective involvement in something profound that broadens opportunities for many. The participants of this study embodied that principle, and the development of their leadership represents the shift of mind that can occur when leaders perceive the world through different lenses. With a broader perspective, leaders are better equipped to become more perceptive and effective leaders.

These emerging millennial leaders have great idealism and commitment to their vision of social justice. They embrace diversity, favor collaborative leadership, believe in empowering and validating others, and feel comfortable with technological breakthroughs. The participants have faced and overcome a myriad of challenges. They have developed coping skills and a strong belief in their leadership abilities, which they intend to hone and improve through ongoing learning. They find community engagement and service to others gratifying. Their high expectations for themselves entail the moral obligation to treat all others with honor and respect.

These millennial leaders saw partnerships as an essential element of leadership within organizations and communities. Collaboration allowed them to become more adept at building organizational and community networks and to bolster global partnerships. Their efforts in this vein were instrumental in developing a means for pursuing results that were utilized for constructive organizational and community transformation. Such transformation is possible when individuals come together in the spirit of collaboration to create positive change. These emerging leaders were striving to “make the world a better place, *tikkun olam*—literally, to heal the world” (King, 2004, p. 341). They sought to guide their organizations and communities to realize a shared vision through shared leadership. Through this generative and uplifting approach, they endeavored to promote the continued growth and advancement of a collective force to achieve shared aspirations. Embracing diverse perspectives through their leadership allowed for discoveries that bring to life shared dreams through provocative and profound leadership, culminating in collective destinies realized through collaborative organizational and community networks.

It is important to realize the capacity for leaders to improve the lives of many because of collaborative efforts that foster desirable change in organizations and communities. This can be effected through inspired leadership that facilitates paradigm shifts. People are capable of transforming themselves and others because of their connection to organizational and community networks that are dedicated to forging new directions. Individuals can bring about such constructive transformation by coming together to pursue progress out of concern and passion for their organizations and their communities.

The participants provided promise for this framework of constructive transformation through their reflections and affirmations. Their approach provides a structure that can lead to an enriching experience for members of organizations and communities. Tremendous hope is possible when actions are focused on the successful aspects of organizations and communities. Collaboration is a means for achieving the commitment to shared possibilities and hopeful destinies. Leadership stems from thoughtful interaction, especially from the heart, not just the mind, so that leaders may better understand and appreciate the perspectives of others (Kotter & Cohen, 2002). The ability to pursue understanding as leaders encounter differences allows leaders to realize the great value inherent in an array of opinions and lifestyles. Encountering differences contributes to the richness brought forth through diverse perspectives as leaders forge collaboration and partnerships.

Constructive transformation may occur when individuals come together collectively to sculpt constructive change. This is possible when individuals are authentically concerned for others as part of a community and commit to collaborative

efforts. When leaders pursue understanding through an array of different ideas and possibilities, they stand on a broader foundation to forge an informed perspective, allowing us to contribute abundantly to organizations and our communities.

Viewing change through the lenses of differing perspectives enables recognizing possibly overlooked potential for growth for leaders themselves, for their organizations, and for the greater community. These emerging leaders realized that reflecting upon their experiences and remaining open to new ideas helped them to expand their abilities so that as leaders, they could support others to the greatest degree possible. They embraced learning that enriched their passion and their inclination to remain hopeful for the promise of humanity. They valued the strength of faith in human possibility through continuous personal, organizational, and community growth and transformation.



“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

MARGARET MEAD

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Review Questions	Interview Questions
<p>How do emerging leaders from a variety of organizations and community groups define and enact their leadership styles?</p> <p>Community Advocacy (Guardian Angel) Community Health Partnership Organizer (Swan) Education Administration (Cheerleader) Human Resources Administration (Matriarch) International Programs & Services (Diplomat) Teach for America New York (Butterfly)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you define your leadership style? • How do you put your style or view of leadership into practice? • How would you define your generation of millennials? • How do you envision your generation contributing to leadership and shaping society? • What are the prevailing perspectives about leadership for your generation and how do you envision your impact on the future?
<p>What behaviors, characteristics, experiences, ideas, practices, qualities, and values describe and influence emerging organizational and community leaders?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What experiences have influenced the development of your leadership style? • What ideas, practices, and values have most influenced your leadership style? • What behaviors, characteristics, and qualities do you admire and emulate most in organizational and community leaders? • How do you as an emerging leader foster collaboration and partnerships in your organization and community? • How do you as an emerging leader build capacity in your organization and community? • How do you as an emerging leader cultivate communication that is participatory to improve organizational connectivity and increase understanding? • How do you as an emerging leader encourage and facilitate teamwork to develop cohesive groups and create dynamic organizations? • How do you as an emerging leader encourage organizational creativity? • What are some of the challenges and successes that organizations and community groups realize in implementing change?
<p>How does transformational learning affect emerging organizational and community leaders?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have your learning experiences influenced your organizational and community leadership? • How do you contribute to your organization or the community based on your emergence and transformation as a leader? • How have you changed and grown over the years, and how have your learning experiences been transformational as an emerging leader?
<p>How is emergent organizational and community leadership fostered through a collegiate leadership development program?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What influence has your participation in a collegiate leadership development program had in relation to your organizational and community leadership? • How has your involvement in leadership development and community service activities influenced your perspective on civic engagement and public responsibility?

Appendix B: Journal Questions

Review Questions	Journal Questions
How do emerging leaders from a variety of organizations and community groups define and enact their leadership styles?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you define your leadership style? • How do you put your style or view of leadership into practice? • How would you define your generation and your contributions to society as millennials? • How do you envision your generation contributing as leaders to shape the future?
What behaviors, characteristics, experiences, ideas, practices, qualities, and values describe and influence emerging organizational and community leaders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What experiences have influenced the development of your leadership style? • What ideas, practices, and values do you embrace as an emerging organizational and community leader? • What behaviors, characteristics, and qualities do you most admire and emulate in organizational and community leaders?
How does transformational learning affect emerging organizational and community leaders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have you changed and grown over the years, and how have your learning experiences been transformative to you as an emerging leader?
How is emergent organizational and community leadership fostered through a collegiate leadership development program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on your participation in a collegiate leadership development program, what did you learn, and how has that influenced your leadership style? • How have the leadership development and community service components of the collegiate leadership development program contributed to your growth as an emerging leader? • How has your involvement in leadership development and community service activities influenced your perspective on civic engagement and public responsibility?

Appendix C: Leadership Creed Questions

Research Questions	Leadership Creed Questions
How do emerging leaders from a variety of organizations and community groups define and enact their leadership styles?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What beliefs represent your leadership? • How is your practice of leadership expressed through a personal creed?
What behaviors, characteristics, experiences, ideas, practices, qualities, and values describe and influence emerging organizational and community leaders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which experiences have influenced your stance as an emerging leader? • What ideas, practices, and values do you embrace as an emerging leader? • What behaviors, characteristics, and qualities do you most admire and emulate with regard to organizational and community leadership?
How does transformational learning affect emerging organizational and community leaders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you stand for as the result of your learning experiences and transformation as an emerging leader?
How is emergent organizational and community leadership fostered through a collegiate leadership development program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is your involvement in a collegiate leadership development program reflected in your leadership style? • What are your beliefs regarding community service, civic engagement, and public responsibility as a result of your participation in a collegiate leadership development program?

Appendix D: Focus Group Questions

Review Questions	Focus Group Questions
How do emerging leaders from a variety of organizations and community groups define and enact their leadership styles?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you define your generation and your contributions to society as millennials? • How do you envision your generation contributing to leadership and shaping the future?
What behaviors, characteristics, experiences, ideas, practices, qualities, and values describe and influence emerging organizational and community leaders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What experiences have influenced the development of your leadership styles? • What ideas, practices, and values have most influenced your leadership styles? • What behaviors, characteristics, and qualities do you embrace and emulate as emerging leaders? • How do you as emerging leaders foster collaboration and partnerships in your organizations and communities? • How do you as emerging leaders build capacity within your organizations and communities? • How do you as emerging leaders cultivate participatory communication to improve organizational connectivity and to increase understanding? • How do you as emerging leaders encourage and facilitate teamwork to develop cohesive groups and create dynamic organizations? • How do you as emerging leaders encourage organizational creativity? • What are some of the challenges and successes that organizations and community groups realize when implementing change?
How does transformational learning affect emerging organizational and community leaders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have your learning experiences influenced and transformed your organizational and community leadership?
How is emergent organizational and community leadership fostered through a collegiate leadership development program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has your involvement in leadership development and community service activities influenced your perspectives on civic engagement and public responsibility? • What influence has participation in a collegiate leadership development program had in relation to your organizational and community leadership perspectives?

Appendix E: Research Protocol

Review Questions	Data Collection	Data Analysis
How do emerging leaders from a variety of organizations and community groups define and enact their leadership styles?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Journals • Creeds • Focus Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review interview transcriptions, journals, leadership creeds, and focus group transcript. • Identify key themes, terms, and variables. • Construct categories within the various cases. • Build abstracts across cases to determine patterns. • Triangulate data.
What behaviors, characteristics, experiences, ideas, practices, qualities, and values describe and influence emerging organizational and community leaders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Journals • Creeds • Focus Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review interview transcriptions, journals, leadership creeds, and focus group transcript. • Identify key themes, terms, and variables. • Construct categories within the various cases. • Build abstracts across cases to determine patterns. • Triangulate data.
How does transformational learning affect emerging organizational and community leaders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Journals • Creeds • Focus Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review interview transcriptions, journals, leadership creeds, and focus group transcript. • Identify key themes, terms, and variables. • Construct categories within the various cases. • Build abstracts across cases to determine patterns. • Triangulate data.
How is emergent organizational and community leadership fostered through a collegiate leadership development program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Journals • Creeds • Focus Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review interview transcriptions, journals, leadership creeds, and focus group transcript. • Identify key themes, terms, and variables. • Construct categories within the various cases. • Build abstracts across cases to determine patterns. • Triangulate data.

Appendix F: Butterfly Leadership Creed



Butterfly Leadership Creed

- I believe that great leaders inspire others to join them in their leadership endeavors. To do this, a leader must hold certain qualities that [are conveyed] to others just by being in their presence.
- I believe that a true leader leads by example. Their leadership is exerted in every action, word, and project in which the leaders are involved. Great leaders are often humble and hold true to their values.
- I believe that a leader is comforting to be around because he or she reassures others. Leaders encourage others to try their best and always put forth the extra effort to guarantee success in every aspect of their lives.
- I believe that a leader is selfless of time and resources, while still knowing how to keep a healthy balance in life.
- I believe that true leaders are honest with themselves and with others because they know that honesty is liberating and will generate open communication.
- I believe that leaders reflect on their past to help shape their future.
- I believe that leaders know how to overcome adversity. They understand that they must be strong to overcome obstacles.
- I believe that a leader knows how to evaluate a situation and see others' perspectives. In any given situation, a leader can take a step back and think of the best solution before acting on instinct.
- I believe that true leaders need to know how to follow, as well as how to lead. They know how to share responsibility and understand that they can benefit from the talent of others.
- I believe that leaders surround themselves with other leaders to learn from their peers.
- I believe that leader are always learning and growing as various people come and go in and out of their lives because they are influenced by the different perspectives that they are exposed to and carry forward with them.
- I believe that leaders should put themselves in new and unfamiliar situations to understand perspectives of other races, cultures, religions, backgrounds, and lifestyles better.
- I believe that leaders know, accept, and understand that they are only as strong as the people they lead; therefore, they must lead with compassion.
- I believe that true leadership is the purest form of inspiration.



“Every challenge, every opportunity, every situation has been a seed for growth, helping me to create a garden full of flowers that represent these experiences. Whenever I am presented with a situation that calls for my leadership, I am able to draw from this garden of knowledge and inspire others to find their own ‘flowers.’ A garden needs constant nurturing and will change over time as new flowers are added. Like a butterfly, a strong leader is one who can adapt to these changes and realizes that there is always room for metamorphosis and growth.”

THE BUTTERFLY

Appendix G: Cheerleader Leadership Creed



Cheerleader Leadership Creed

- Leadership involves evolution and growth. Change is inevitable, and as a consequence, a leader must be willing and motivated to embrace new and exciting ideas that emerge.
- I want to become the type of leader [who] promotes self-sufficiency, welcomes creativity, and demands excellence. I want the people [who] work with me to know that I trust their judgment, but they also have to have enough trust in me to ask if they have doubts. I want to learn with [the people whom] I lead.
- Making others feel important and valued even with just a gesture is very important to me. I would want my subordinates to have the comfort level to confide in me about their issues, but at the same time respect me and to not take advantage of our positive relationship.
- A key to being an effective leader is to love and believe in what you are leading. There must be passion to inspire and drive leaders to continue forward on their journey.
- The leader has to have excellent communication skills to understand people's different styles. The leader must also have the ability to convey ideas and visions effectively.
- Staying humble throughout the journey in leading is a must. Leaders must know that they are not above anyone or are not always more knowledgeable than the whole.
- Taking on only what you can physically do. Many leaders are so overly energetic that they take on so many projects that they do not attend to all of them, so they give themselves a bad name.
- Telling the truth, whether it may be good or bad. Not being afraid of what people may think for standing up for what is right, and knowing the difference. Standing firm about what is happening in the organization. Not being swayed one way or another because of what people say. Staying informed and knowing all sides of the issues help the leader stay focused.
- Working hard for the organization, dealing with issues head on, and having excellent results to show for all the efforts invested in them. To me, these qualities make an effective leader.



“There are many inspiring leadership styles, but I am like a cheerleader because I am the one [who] praises others and constantly cheers for them until they have accomplished their goals. I love to see people achieve their goals, and I value having been a stepping stone along their path to fulfilling their dreams.”

THE CHEERLEADER

Appendix H: Diplomat Leadership Creed



Diplomat Leadership Creed

- I believe that certain people are born with inherent leadership qualities, but others can learn how to become leaders through opportunity and social encouragement.
- I believe that the environment a leader grows up in and the traits attributed to the individual throughout childhood can either encourage or discourage leadership potential.
- I believe that leaders can influence others in positive or negative ways and that the type of leadership qualities exhibited depends on the values and beliefs of the individual.
- I believe that leadership can be displayed and carried out individually, but the most effective type of leadership is inclusive, involving and encouraging partnerships and collaboration.
- When leaders make others feel like leaders, even if they have never seen themselves in that role, this is powerful and transformational.
- I believe that positive leaders possess the following qualities: honesty, integrity, inclusiveness, respect, initiative, and effective communication.
- I believe that the best leaders are individuals who can easily relate to others, whether they come from similar circumstances or have had different experiences. I believe that leaders are teachers, leaving behind an idea, philosophy or call to action, that encourages growth and development in the community from which they emerge.
- I believe that leaders who collaborate with others maintain their authenticity, a sense of humility, and empathy for others.
- I believe that the best leaders embrace diversity without sacrificing their values.
- I believe that leaders should speak out against injustice, even if this conflicts with the opinion of the majority.
- I believe that leaders possess the ability to persuade and influence others, some by words and some by their actions, but the best leaders possess both qualities.
- I believe that leaders emerge when there is a particular need within a particular group or community. Their effectiveness is determined by how well they produce results or enact change. There are many critical issues at this time that require our generation to rise to the challenge of leadership globally.



“I bring forth a diplomatic, consensus-building persona to the organizations and communities with which I collaborate. I am respectful of different points of view and make every effort to consider various sides of an issue. This I have learned through my own experiences and through the relationships I have built throughout the years with people from different cultures and ideological backgrounds. While I do not necessarily agree with certain perspectives, I exercise understanding and compromise when necessary.”

THE DIPLOMAT

Appendix I: Guardian Angel Leadership Creed



Guardian Angel Leadership Creed

- Leadership is not a power struggle. Leadership is not about who is in control. Leadership is not about envy or jealousy; instead, it is about feeling glad and pleased for others' success. Many poor leaders tend to practice the negative aspects of leadership once they are in control. Being insecure as a leader should not occur, or else the leadership style is dysfunctional.
- Good leaders work with their heart as much as with their minds. You have to feel, live, and enjoy your vocation to become a good leader.
- As a leader, you have to expand your ability to adjust to different environments and people's ideas, especially in our generation because we are experiencing significant change. We are experiencing change in our families, in our communities, and in our world. We are modern leaders trying to adjust to a changing society, always trying to consider other generations' values, different ways of thinking, and multiple points of views.
- Leadership means understanding. Good leaders have to understand people's circumstances, lives, and situations to meet their needs.
- Leadership is about consistency in leader's minds, actions, personality. If leaders constantly change in attitude and behavior, then their community will not be able to trust them. That doesn't mean that they can't change; change is always positive, as long as their actions are positive as well. Change comes with experience. Leaders have to learn from both negative and positive experiences, countering the destructive and vicious experiences and trying to further the constructive and beneficial experiences.
- Leadership means embracing and respecting other people's ideas, thoughts, and dreams equally.
- Leadership means respect for others, regardless of their age, ethnicity, beliefs, cultures, and their educational or personal backgrounds.
- I have learned to embrace other people, no matter their age. I learn on a daily basis from my son, my younger sister, and my parents, who represent different generations. Learning is everywhere, and you just have to embrace it because excellent leaders gain knowledge even through what some may deem small and insignificant events.
- Leadership means being positive role models for our future leaders, our children.
- Leadership means so many great things, but without passion, we will never realize our dreams.



"To be a good leader, no matter what age, you have to be mature and wise. Being compassionate and understanding, [as well as] having a sincere passion to support others, are hallmarks of my leadership—like a guardian angel."

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL

Appendix J: Matriarch Leadership Creed



Matriarch Leadership Creed

- I believe that leadership begins with any person who sets an example for others every day without having to bribe, persuade, and/or obligate others to follow suit.
- I believe that the key role of leadership should be to empower team members so that they then can reach out to their communities with the knowledge and skills bestowed upon them.
- I believe that leadership is authentic, humble, and giving. Leaders need no title feel important. Leaders respect all members of society, no matter where they come from.
- I believe that leadership is born, as well as created. The skill and ability to guide others is gained through life's experiences and cultivated when a common goal is achieved.
- I believe that leaders should remain cognizant of the fact that followers come from all walks of life.
- Loyalty and trust should never be taken for granted, and leaders should never forget that they are only as influential as the people they lead.



"I practice my style of leadership in everything I do, from being a good example to my younger sisters to guiding and lending support to my family, friends, and colleagues like a matriarch."

THE MATRIARCH

Appendix K: Swan Leadership Creed



Swan Leadership Creed

- A leader can be anyone from a psychologist who improves the mind, to a fitness trainer who improves the body, to a surgeon who improves the heart. Leaders will not succeed if they only think of themselves. Their success is measured by how they lend a hand to help others.
- Leaders should believe in equality and treat others the way they want to be treated, regardless of differences.
- Leaders should practice etiquette and know the time and place to speak their mind.
- A leader does not have to carry an executive title to be a leader. My grandfather did not receive his diploma or hold a specific title, but he was indeed my favorite leader.
- Leaders should have the strength to endure challenges because enduring challenges will only make them stronger.
- A leader should believe in equality, compassion, etiquette, empathy, strength, honesty, respect and be passionate about what he or she strives for.
- A leader should be respectful and should appreciate others.
- Leaders should be passionate about what they want to accomplish; with no passion, there is nothing to strive for and no dreams to pursue.
- A leader knows that there are bumpy roads ahead, but chooses not to take the smooth ride to learn and grow along the way.
- A leader should be empathetic to understand those less fortunate.
- A leader never stops learning and gains knowledge to give knowledge. A leader must reflect on failure and success and learns from defeat and victory.
- A leader should be honest to gain the trust of others.
- Leaders find and bring out the potential in others; their greatest success is for others to continue forward in support of others.
- Leaders should be compassionate and think not only of their benefit, but also of the benefit to society.
- I believe that leadership is a process in development that improves the mind, body, and heart.



“I knew early on that I had a gift to be an advocate for others, but did not know how to express myself with regard to leadership. My life has changed dramatically ever since, and my transformation as a leader has been like that of a swan.”

THE SWAN

Appendix L: Consent to Participate in Research

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Lawrence Roybal, a doctoral candidate in Organizational Learning & Instructional Technology in the College of Education at the University of New Mexico. Research findings will contribute to a doctoral dissertation. You were selected as a possible volunteer for this study because you successfully completed a collegiate leadership development program that emphasized collaboration and are an emerging organizational and community leader. This research study is designed to examine your role in community and organizational leadership in relation to your learning experiences in a higher education leadership development program.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explore how emerging leaders develop and exercise collaborative leadership, and, in particular, how they learn from their experiences to become more effective community and organizational leaders. This study will examine the behaviors and characteristics of emerging community and organizational leaders, as well as the experiences, ideas, values, and practices that have helped them to develop a collaborative style of leadership. This study will also explore how collaborative leadership facilitates positive organizational development and transformation in a variety of settings.

PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES

If you choose to participate, I, Lawrence Roybal, will meet with you for approximately 30 minutes to provide an orientation to this 45-day research project and will conduct an interview with you for a total of approximately 90 minutes. You will also be asked to keep a research journal for 30 days from the date of orientation to reflect on your leadership experiences and learning insights, to write within 30 days of the orientation meeting a statement or creed of approximately 500 words that summarizes your beliefs about leadership, and to participate in a 90-minute focus group session to be held no later than 45 days after the orientation meeting to discuss themes that have emerged from the interviews, leadership creeds, and research journals with your former collegiate leadership development program colleagues. The focus group has the potential to generate additional information from the collective efforts of the participants that could augment the data acquired individually from the respondents through the interviews, research journals, and leadership creeds. I may also contact you with follow-up questions.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

As noted above, various demands on your time will be made during this 45-day research project, starting with a 30-minute orientation, followed by a 90-minute interview, completion of a research journal and the leadership creed within 30 days of the orientation meeting, and ending 45 days later with the focus group. In the focus group, you will have the opportunity to present your leadership creed and to share your thoughts concerning your leadership and learning

experiences with your former collegiate leadership development program colleagues. Therefore, it is expected that respondents would help to alleviate any risk to the confidentiality of the study by not repeating or attributing the remarks of others in such a manner that would identify participants. This risk of compromising your anonymity and confidentiality to the public will be alleviated by using pseudonyms for all attributed remarks distributed as part of the dissertation. Another potential risk is that you may become critical of your own leadership style through the self-reflection required as part of this study. I will be audiotaping your interview and the focus group session, unless you request not to be audiotaped if this would cause you discomfort or pose any risk to you whatsoever.

No other risks, discomforts, or inconveniences (other than the time it takes for you to participate in the interviews, focus group, and other research activities) are expected. However, please raise any possible concerns, if applicable.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

You will not receive any compensation for participating in this study, and there is no guarantee or promise that you will personally benefit from this research. However, the results of the study could help develop our understanding about collaborative leadership and organizational change and development. In addition, you may benefit from an increased understanding and/or appreciation of your own leadership style through the self-reflection required as part of this research project. Gaining insights from the experiences and reflections of others through the focus group is another potential benefit to participants.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information obtained in connection with this study that can be identified with you will remain confidential to the public and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. All factors that can be used to personally identify you will be removed to ensure your anonymity to the public as part of the dissertation. Audiotapes of all interviews and the focus group session will be used to assist the researcher with the analysis and interpretation of findings. Recordings of the interviews and the focus group session will be destroyed upon transcription. Transcripts will be cleaned of any identifiable indicators and stored in a locked cabinet in a secure location for seven years, after which time, they will be destroyed. Additional data collected as part of this research study that can be identified with participants will be coded in such a way that these data will not be identifiable to the public in any reports that emanate from this study. Leadership creeds and research journals will also be cleaned of identifiable indicators and stored in a locked cabinet in a secure location for seven years, after which time, they will be destroyed. The anonymity and confidentiality of your involvement in this study will be diligently protected from the public by using pseudonyms for all attributed remarks distributed as part of the dissertation. Furthermore, it is expected that participants will respect the confidentiality of this research by not repeating or attributing the remarks of others in such a manner that would identify respondents. Therefore, by partaking in this research study, you agree to respect and maintain the confidentiality of all participants.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

If you decide to participate in this research study, you are free to withdraw your consent and to withdraw from participating at any time, with no penalty or loss of benefits to which you might

otherwise be entitled. You may also refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATOR, FACULTY SPONSOR, AND REVIEW BOARD

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact: Lawrence Roybal (principal investigator), at (505) 681-9981, or P.O. Box 26971, Albuquerque, NM 87125, or Dr. Patricia Boverie (faculty sponsor), at (505) 277-2408, or MSC05 3040, 1 University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131. If you have any other concerns or complaints, contact the Institutional Review Board at the University of New Mexico, 1717 Roma, NE, Room 205, Albuquerque, NM 87131, (505) 277-2257, or toll-free at 1-866-844-9018.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been provided a copy of this form.

Name of Participant (please print)

Signature of Participant

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

In my judgment, the participant is voluntarily and knowingly providing informed consent and possesses the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study.

Name of Investigator or Designee (please print)

Signature of Investigator or Designee

Date

IRB APPROVAL STAMP