

1/19/18: NYCNEN Meeting Notes

Panelist Conversation

Moderator: **Specific policy or coalition that you would want to speak to?**

Adrianna Espinoza, Manager of NYLCVEF:

Greengroup: 40 non-profits coalition

- GrowNYC's vision of new regional Hunts Point with mission of getting local food to more areas
 - Greengroup network worked to secure \$5 million from city and double from state to expand these programs.
 - Other ideas: youth markets, and affordable boxes (similar to CSA, but much cheaper)

Assemblywoman Carmen De La Rosa, Assembly District 72:

Marble Hill Community Garden: located in NYCHA development, vulnerable population (children, health issues, elderly)

- Connected residents through food and residents organized as a result
- Residents worked independently to raise funds (using local artists to tell migration stories of NYCHA residents → helped reclaim their space)
 - Moderator: emphasizes importance of even small initiatives are important and full of potential

WIC: legislation that expands WIC benefits → DOH to develop alternative WIC ID cards

- Working to pass through both state houses

Gabriel Morales, Campaign Director, Brandworkers:

Tom Cat Bakery: large bread supplier to NYC stores and restaurants

- Tom Cat threatened immigrant workers with mass firings if they could not produce appropriate documentation showing their right to work in the U.S. within 10 days, as a result of an ICE immigration audit.
- 24 workers were fired.

Brandworkers began organizing protests with Tom Cat employees to demand more employee protections for immigrant workers.

- For example: requiring warrants, or giving more notice for employees to make proper arrangements in response to these audits.

Brandworkers is calling on restaurants to boycott Tom Cat to demonstrate that this industry would not operate without immigrant workers.

Qiana Mickie, Executive Director of Just Food:

Just Food Conference: Persistence and Resistance (March 25th)

- Increasing awareness of policies, building solidarity to increase self-determination of individuals/partners and build connections → to impact community level → systemic level
- Teach individuals through workshops/conferences how to develop connect and engage a system that works for them.
- Demystify how to participate → people power in local city government
- Intersectional issues, understand the power we have, and insert our power or create alternative forms of economies

Moderator: Endorsement of Just Food's Training of Trainers workshop!

Moderator: **How do you promote this intersectionality without losing focus?**

Qiana Mickie: Food justice is complex/intersectional.

- Individual level: Building skills to feel strong and speaking from experience and connecting to the next person.
- Interdisciplinary level: We all need to be part of food justice work, using your skills/power by joining CSA or supporting local farmer to promote the cause.
- Even sharing your passion with your family members/coworkers finding commonality and effecting systemic change.

Adrianna Espinoza: Intersectionality is really difficult, but it can start by talking to partners and learning about their work and collaborating on issues.

Example: Farm Bill

- Easy to spend all time on this one issue, but focus on staying connected to various issues.
- Talking to partners: NY Academy of Medicine
 - Developing fact sheets & share the work
 - League: focus on small scale farmers
 - Academy: focus on obesity
 - Another organization: focus on food security & SNAP benefits
 - Volunteer: professional graphic designer
 - Take-away: Coming together and adding value.

Assemblywoman Carmen De La Rosa, Assembly District 72:

Young people are energetic, inspired to make changes.

Advice from an older legislator: understand what your core values are... pick 3/5 things that are your values...everything else is a negotiation.

Feel motivated to advocate for all issues, but you don't know everything and need to use experts to be a voice for what is reflective of your core values.

- Connect with people; meet with everyone even the people with different opinions.
- Be present, focused, targeted to accomplish something.
- Understand your privilege.
- Pick an area informed by your experience.
- Stay humble and listen to others.

Gabriel Morales:

Develop an understanding of how race and white supremacy is impacting our work, and then ask what are we doing? We implemented a gender justice initiative: reaffirm our commitment to all genders.

Moderator: **What is one action point to support the work that you are doing?**

Gabriel Morales:

Go to: bit.ly/tomcatworkersrising to ask restaurants to stop using Tom Cat Bakery's products.

Qiana Mickie:

- Reach out to city council for discretionary funding & community board positions are open!
- JustFood: reach out, follow on social media (FB & Twitter)
 - Conference: March 25th & opportunities to volunteer and intern at Just Food

Adrianna Espinoza:

- Food waste donation: last year taken out of legislation, but call state officials to let them know you care about this issue
- Contact congressmembers to support funding for CHIP and DACA.

Assemblywoman Carmen De La Rosa, Assembly District 72:

- Get to know your local officials & demand accountability from them.
- Request meetings for them to hear your voice and make policies that reflect this.
- Use your platforms to promote your values.

Audience Q&A:

Q: How can medical profession (doctors) help promote nutrition?

A:

RD: personal experience of medical staff spoke from a judgmental place about a patient that ate fried chicken w/ high TG's.

- Recommendations:
 - Medicine needs to be more culturally competent in patient education with healthcare professionals capable of speaking other languages.
 - It is important to make sick people more comfortable and one way is being able to say popular foods in their language to put them at ease.

Dietetic intern: Doctors don't listen to RDs. You can't be an expert in every field → respect other fields. Advocate for RDs to write diet orders.

Qiana Mickie: Finding ways to connect with food justice people. Need allies outside of field. Giving relevant, cultural information. Connect culture to patient education. Dismantle racial inequity.

RD: Mandate to do a community assessment. Looking for physician champions to do mandated community tie-in.

Adriana Espinoza: Be the change you want to see. Give patient brochures that reflect your values.

Audience member: Inform patients of "Wholesome Wave" Program/Healthbucks: match every SNAP dollar to buy f/v.

Q: How are these businesses being impacted by this loss of workers at Tom Cat? Do you have a list of businesses that follow good practices?

Gabriel Morales: They brought new people in to fill these spots, but these were very skilled workers the quality of bread has declined. Not really, all of these businesses are exploitative.

Q: How can we make sure that we are honoring/partners of the community, even with a busy schedule?

A:

Qiana Mickie: Word of mouth.

- Leverage your privilege to make things accessible.
 - Example: Ambassador program to create a free share for their ambassadors to share with their friends, communities. This helps people be informed and accessible to people.
- Door-to-door promotion.
- Increasing community leadership. Give information then they can become leaders.
- Be flexible to make things accessible for people.

Assemblywoman Carmen De La Rosa: Be repetitive. Repeat events. Be flexible.

- Campaign style → door-to-door. Very successful during election, let's do that for the Farm Bill!
- Volunteers → meeting people where they are.

Q: How do create a culture of compensating people for their time involved in this work to create true equity?

A:

Qiana Mickie: Embrace the paradox of being a grassroots campaign that is underfunded.

- Example: Shift positions that were salaried to hourly → creative raise the floor.
- Just Food: Hourly staff: \$20/hour
 - Not customary in grassroots organizations but raising the floor.
 - Finding opportunities: seeking funding to build job opportunities at Conference.
- Balance giving proper credit and experience.
- Incremental change.

Moderator: Holding the door for others to come through...being transparent about wages...