

2022 Evaluation of Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership

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Overview



Designed by The Corps Network (Capri St. Vil), with the assistance of consultants Mahdi B. Davenport and Juanita C. Brown, Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership is an interactive workshop that seeks to address the Impact of systemic and institutional oppression on the individual.

Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership looks to disrupt the cycle of oppression. We often talk about empowering young people, but we feel we first need to address how young people of color have been affected by generations of historical trauma, which can translate into harmful feelings of unworthiness.

Pictures – [Montana Conservation Corps](#)

In Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership, we examine how disempowerment can manifest itself as a set of counterproductive, unconscious habits and tendencies that quietly accumulate over time. They become an internal force that moves the individual in the opposite direction of their self-confidence and makes it impossible for them to heal.

Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership looks to make the invisible, visible. No one can change a condition in their life that they cannot see or understand. This workshop gives Corpsmembers the tools to be able to identify counterproductive patterns, interrupt them, and replace them with new life-giving patterns.

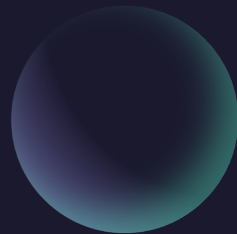


[Mile High Youth Corps](https://www.milehighyouthcorps.org/)



83%

83.3% of Corpsmembers agree or strongly agree that the CLL workshop motivated them to think differently about how racism and other biases are built into our society.



“As a Corpsmember, I found the Corpsmember Liberation & Leadership training highly beneficial and relevant to the Conservation Corps MN & IA and its values. I also learned about what is in my ‘groundwater’ and how it affects my own implicit biases and how those effect my decisions and conversations on a day-to-day basis. Some of the groundwater is clean and comes from good sources but there is definitely tainted groundwater that leads to areas where I need to unlearn things in order to better myself as a person and as a leader in my community.

This training also provided an opportunity for me, as a BIPOC woman to have space to learn. The Corpsmember Liberation & Leadership training provided an opportunity for safe discussion places where we could discuss and grow through any discomfort together.”

- Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa member



Evaluation Approach

To evaluate the impact of the CLL and Sending the Right Signals Workshops, Alterity LLC designed and conducted a survey with Corpsmembers who attended these workshops.

The survey questions were designed in collaboration with TCN and covered the following topics:

- Corpsmembers' participation in CLL and Racial Equity workshops
- Corpsmembers' perceptions about the utility of these workshops
- Corpsmembers' perceptions about the impact of these workshops
- Corpsmembers' feedback on how to improve these workshops in the future
- Corpsmembers' feedback on workshop facilitator
- Sociodemographic information about Corpsmembers



Survey Participants

54 Corpsmembers completed the survey.

The majority of the participants were from Green City Force (NYC) and Minnesota Conservation Corps.

- The average age of study participants was 22 years old.
- **Approximately a third of the participants self-identified as Hispanic/Latino origin.**
- **Nearly 41%** self-identified as Black/African American
- **31.5%** identified as White
- **13.0%** identified as more than one race.
- **Only 3.7%** were American Indian/Alaskan Native or Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI).
- (See stats in evaluation report (page 3) for numbers to share in chart.



Picture – [Green City Force \(NYC\)](#)

Gender/Sexual Orientation

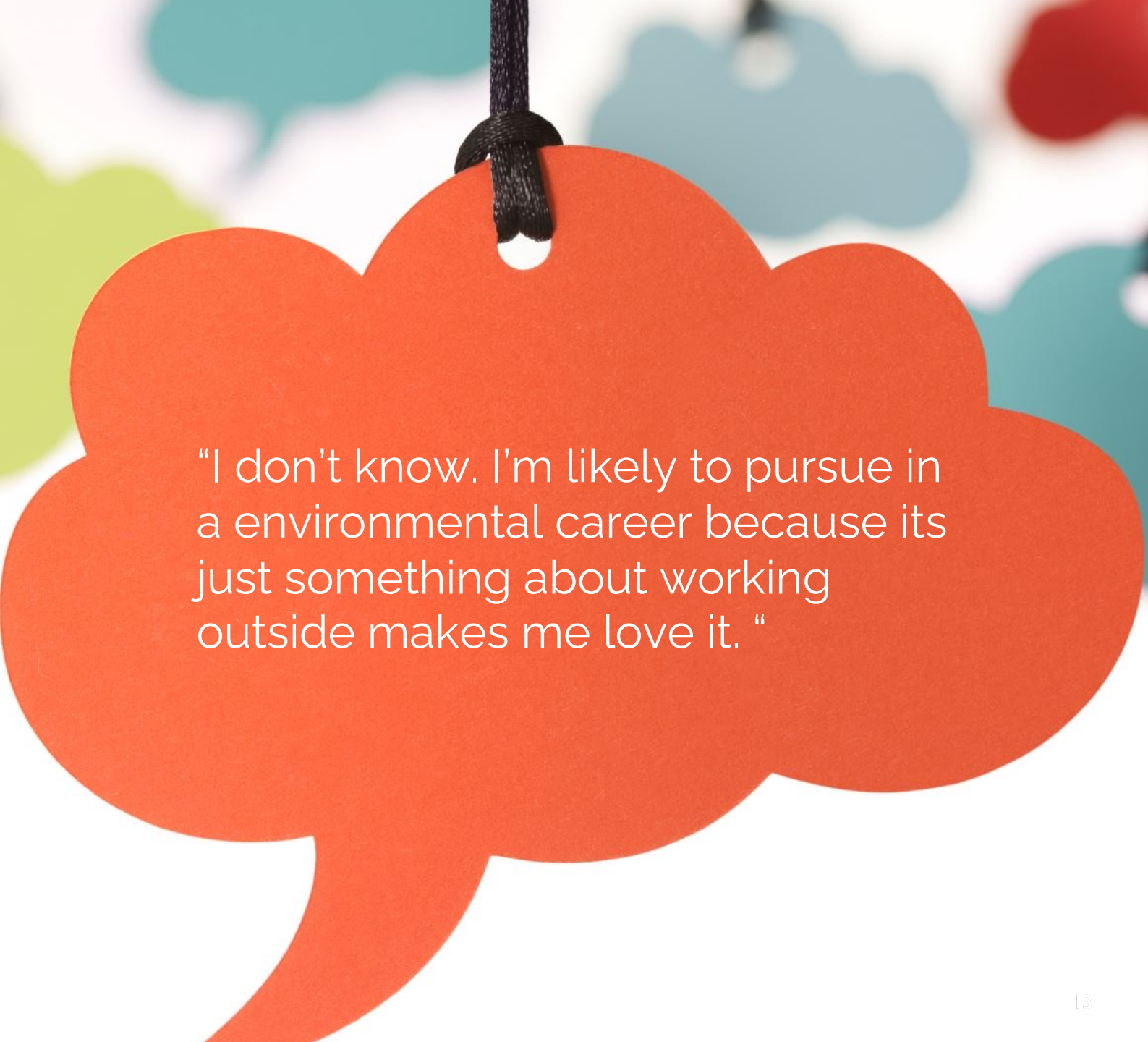
	Number	Percentage
How do you currently describe yourself?		
Male	21	38.9%
Female	29	53.7%
Non-binary	2	3.7%
Transgender	2	3.7%
Which best represents how you think of yourself?		
Homosexual, Gay, or Lesbian	10	18.5%
Heterosexual	23	42.6%
Bisexual	15	27.8%
Something else	3	5.6%
I don't know	3	5.6%
Total	54	100.0%

Most survey participants (**61.1%**) have been a Corpsmember for less than 6 months and most (**66.6%**) said they were likely or very likely to pursue a conservation and environment career.

Length of time being a Corpsmember

	Number	Percentage
0-3 months	16	29.6%
4-6 months	17	31.5%
7-9months	9	16.7%
10-12 months	4	7.4%
Longer than 12 months	8	14.8%
Total	54	100.0%

Please explain your response to the likelihood of pursuing conservation and environment career question
([Civic Works](#), Baltimore)



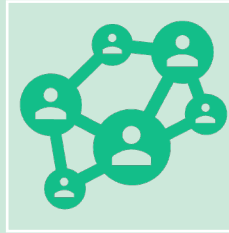
"I don't know. I'm likely to pursue in a environmental career because its just something about working outside makes me love it. "

Please explain your response to the likelihood of pursuing conservation and environment career question
([Civic Works](#), Baltimore)



"I'm looking to join the conservation field but still learning about different options - I'm not sure I like the work life balance of seasonal and environmental work in the long term picture."

Please explain your response to the likelihood of pursuing conservation and environment career question
([Green City Force](#), New York City)




"I would like to pursue a career in sustainability, but the genuine truth is I do not know if I can find a job that will be able to sustain me financially within New York City, but I genuinely enjoy working with nature, I value all information regarding Botanical Knowledge."



"I'm dedicated to using my experience in urban agriculture, horticulture, and green infrastructure. I'm even currently looking into merging my passions of the green industry and childcare and education and got hired with the DOE and found a high school that teaches farming and sustainable practices."


Please explain your response to the likelihood of pursuing conservation and environment career question
([Green City Force](#), New York City)



"To change there needs be change, I can try my best to influence and put the word out there."


Please explain your response to the likelihood of pursuing conservation and environment career question

([LA Conservation Corps](#), Los Angeles)



“Having been with the Corps for about 8 months now, I’ve gained a new perspective on what career I can choose for myself. I would probably need a lot more information regarding the careers available with the Corps but it’s definitely something I’d be open to.”

Please explain your response to the likelihood of pursuing conservation and environment career question
([Civicorps](#), Oakland)

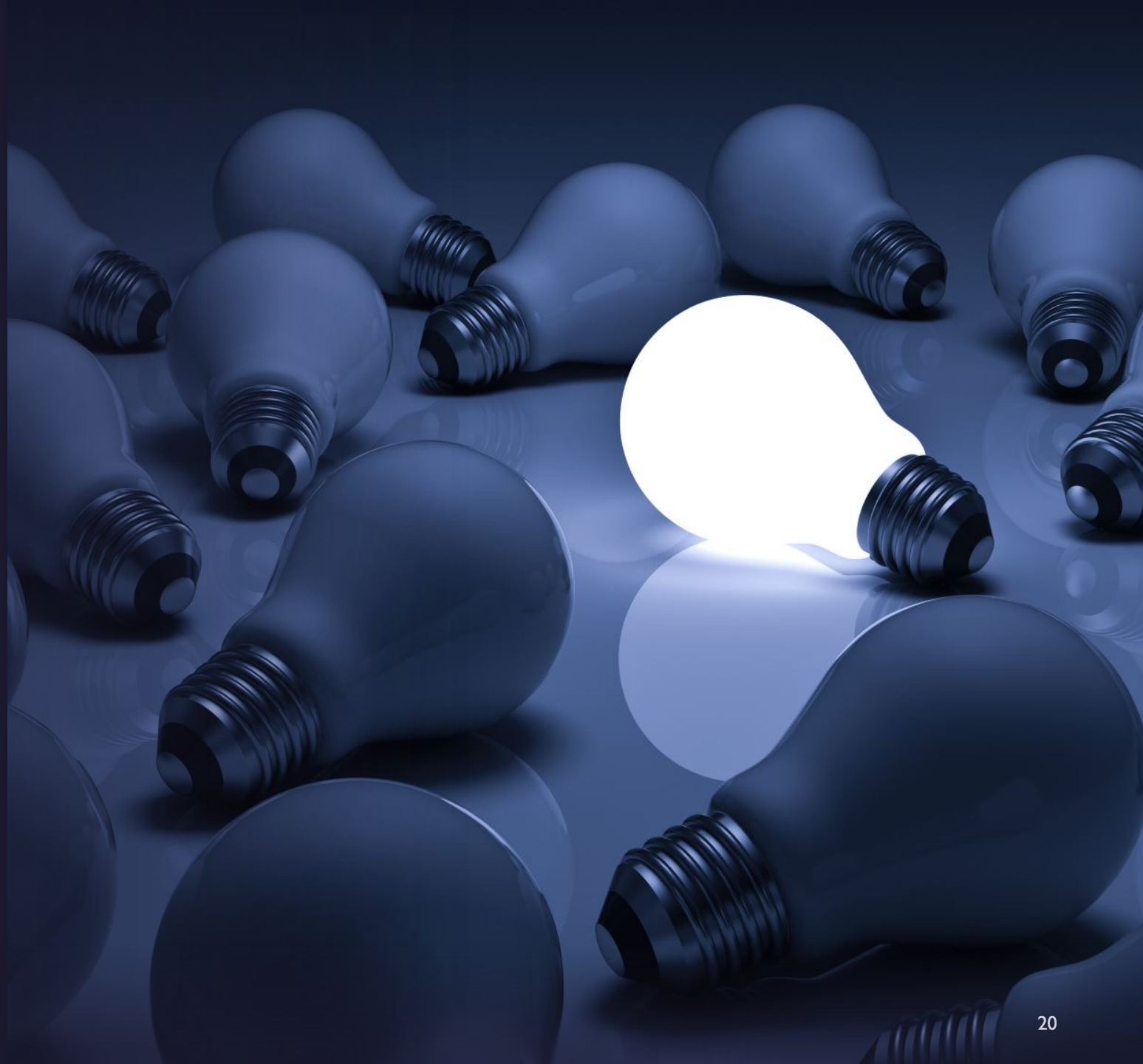


"I love working outside with my hands. Experiencing nature brings me joy and working in a team is fulfilling."

Key Results & Discussion

Key Results & Discussion

A great deal of the Racial Equity and Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership (CLL) workshops focused on providing Corpsmembers with the knowledge and tools to investigate structures of power, perceptions of leadership and personal identity, and agency.



Defining Elements of Racism

Most Corpsmembers (66%) were able to identify elements of racism and 85% have directly observed people of different racial backgrounds being treated differently in general and in conservation and environment careers.

In the open-ended response section of the survey one Corpsmember offered the following definition of racism:

“Racism is fundamentally about understanding the historical impact/oppression of a people that had the entire trajectory of their future derailed by a Eurocentric System, Understanding the prevalence and relevance of said Eurocentricity and how that has enabled some to thrive within this system whilst simultaneously disabling others to keep them disadvantaged.”

Conversely, almost a quarter (22%) of Corpsmembers believed that racism was primarily interpersonal in nature, defined by disrespect or personal bias. This belief among Corpsmembers is underscored by this open-ended response:

“Racism is a problem that does have a power dynamic and is being disrespectful to others, but it is also heavily influenced by personal bias.”

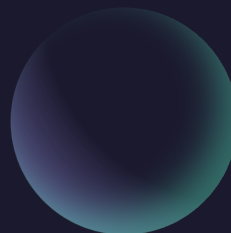
Belief Systems & Belonging

- Nearly three-quarters of the Corpsmembers felt confident in their ability to recognize disempowering patterns and adopt new belief systems to break disempowering patterns.
- Although there was little variation in these responses across the Corps with regards to recognizing patterns, Corps in Oakland, Los Angeles and Baltimore had higher percentages of respondents who were only somewhat confident in their ability to adopt new belief systems to break disempowering patterns.
- Respondents were less confident overall (66%) in their awareness of people and services available to adopt new belief systems.



Belief Systems & Belonging

While just over a quarter of respondents said that they can be themselves in any situation, more than half noted that their ability to be their true selves is based on the assessment of the situation.



51.8% of Corpsmembers said most of the time they judge how much they can be their true self based on the situation, whereas **27.8%** said most of the time they can be themselves in any situation

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I can be myself in whatever situation I find myself.	27.78%
I judge how much I can be my true self based on the situation.	51.85%
I do not have spaces where I can show up as my authentic self.	5.56%
I have to keep parts of myself hidden most of the time.	14.81%
There are no spaces where I feel comfortable enough to be myself.	0.00%
TOTAL	



Application & Learning

Nearly 80% of Corpsmembers agreed that they will be able to apply the things they learned in the CLL workshop in their lives. The majority of respondents also planned to use their enhanced understanding of systemic racism in their lives.

Picture - [Conservation Corps of Minnesota and Iowa](#)



Application & Learning

Corpsmembers were very thoughtful in their reflection about their experiences in the CLL Workshop. Corpsmember respondents from Baltimore credit the workshop with providing them with a more expansive view of terms and definitions about racism and power.

They also appreciated how the workshop presented the historical context for terms.



Similarly, Corpsmembers in Brooklyn also credited the CLL workshop with their newfound awareness and they also appreciated the space for open dialogue and exposure to leadership building strategies. These sentiments were echoed by Corpsmembers in Iowa and Los Angeles.

“I really liked the idea of ‘calling in’ and encouraging everyone to do self-reflection in a safe space.”



Of note, Corpsmembers in Los Angeles, Oakland and Minnesota stated that the most enjoyable aspect of the CLL workshop were the engaging facilitators.

“I enjoyed how the space felt in a sense where folks were not called out, but called in to become empowered individuals who recognize how racism and power affect different people.”



85.2% of Corpsmembers found the Racial Equity workshop very useful or extremely useful.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Extremely useful	35.19%
Very useful	50.00%
Somewhat useful	11.11%
Not at all useful	3.70%
TOTAL	

85% of Corpsmembers found the Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership Workshop very useful or extremely useful.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Extremely useful	42.59%
Very useful	42.59%
Somewhat useful	14.81%
Not at all useful	0.00%
TOTAL	



83.3% of Corpsmembers agree or strongly agree that the CLL workshop motivated them to think differently about how racism and other biases are built in to our society.

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER DISAGREE OR AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
"The Corpsmember Liberation and Leadership workshop motivated me to think differently about how racism and other biases are built in to our society."	5.56%	3.70%	7.41%	46.30%	37.04%

After attending the CLL workshop, **74%** of Corpsmembers feel very confident or extremely confident in their ability to recognize disempowering patterns that reduce their personal power

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Extremely confident	37.04%
Very confident	37.04%
Somewhat confident	24.07%
Not at all confident	1.85%
TOTAL	



72.2% of Corpsmembers feel very confident or extremely confident in their ability to adopt new belief systems in order to break disempowering patterns

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Extremely confident	31.48%
Very confident	40.74%
Somewhat confident	22.22%
Not at all confident	5.56%
TOTAL	



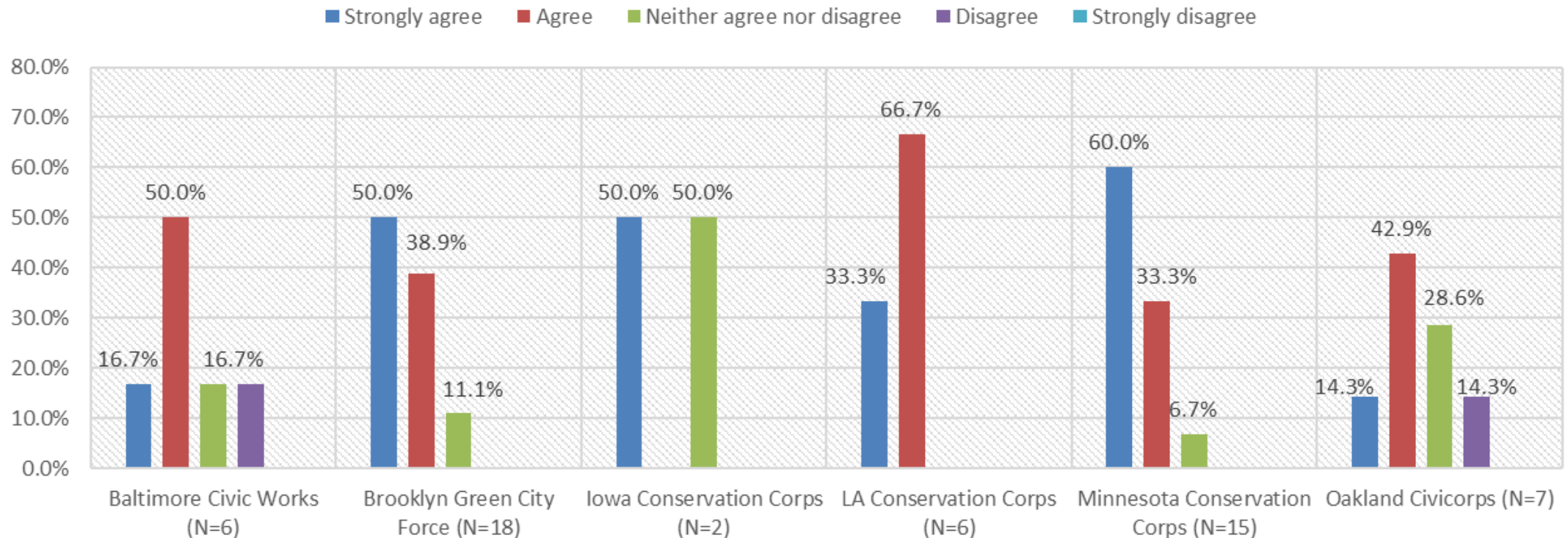
85.1% of Corpsmembers agree or strongly agree that they can identify ways in which people from different racial backgrounds are treated differently.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	46.30%
Agree	38.89%
Neither agree nor disagree	11.11%
Disagree	3.70%
Strongly disagree	0.00%
TOTAL	



Diversity in Conservation Careers

I notice ways in which people from different racial backgrounds appear in conservation and environment careers.



75.9% of Corpsmembers agree or strongly agree that they plan to apply what they learned about systemic racism from CLL workshop to their life.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	42.59%
Agree	33.33%
Neither agree or disagree	22.22%
Disagree	1.85%
Strongly disagree	0.00%
TOTAL	



Corpsmember Feedback

What did Corpsmembers enjoy most about CLL workshop?

Key Themes

- Expansive view of terms and definitions
- Personal growth
- Historical context
- Understanding of empowerment
- Appreciation for the space for open dialogue
- New found awareness of definitions
- Opportunity to share life experiences
- Engaging facilitators
- Leadership skill building strategies





“It was very empowering and informative, it touched on a few topics I was unaware of and was able to gain more insight.”



“I believe that the dialogue was a really valuable one to have and watching everyone share and relate how their experiences are interconnected to one bigger picture was definitely a positive experience to be a part of.”



“I love how we was in it together.”



“I enjoyed having a space to discuss this topic, it should be more openly discussed.”



“I wouldn't change a thing everyone learned a lot and we enjoyed seeing faces of different races come together for the black and brown community & also leadership and liberation purposes”



“It was very empowering and informative, it touched on a few topics I was unaware of and was able to gain more insight.”



“THE OPEN CONVERSATION”



“WHAT I ENJOYED THE MOST WAS
EVERYTHING TO BE HONEST !!!”



“THE REDEFINING OF WORDS
LIKE ‘POWER,’ ‘LEADERSHIP’
AND ‘EMPOWERMENT”

“YEAH IT GIVES YOU MORE
KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT
ON WHAT YOU ALREADY
KNOW.”



I REALLY LIKED THE IDEA OF
'CALLING IN' AND
ENCOURAGING EVERYONE
TO DO SELF-REFLECTION IN
A SAFE SPACE"



"THE WAY HOW EVERYONE WAS
ABLE TO BE INVOLVED AND
GIVE FEEDBACK ON HOW THEY
VIEW THEMSELVES IN TERMS OF
BEING ABLE TO LEAD."



"THE FREE SPACE WE WERE
GIVEN TO DISCUSS THE TOPICS.
ALSO, THE SUPERVISORS WERE
VERY OPEN AND FRIENDLY
WITH THE CONVERSATIONS."



“I ENJOYED HOW THE SPACE FELT IN A SENSE WHERE FOLKS WERE NOT CALLED OUT, BUT CALLED INTO BECOME EMPOWERED INDIVIDUALS WHO RECOGNIZE HOW RACISM AND POWER AFFECT DIFFERENT PEOPLE.”



“SMALL BREAK OUT SESSIONS DISCUSSING OSTRACIZATION AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCES”

What would make the CLL workshop better?

Key Themes

More resources
for future growth

Length of
workshop

More
opportunities for
interaction

Workshop format
(Virtual vs. In-
person)

-More breakout
groups

-Longer

Affinity grouping

-More
participation from
Corpsmembers

Corpsmember Comments:



Corpsmember Comments:

“From what I remember the workshop was overall very impactful. Maybe doing more activities to make Corpsmembers interact with each other about how they view leadership could be useful.”

“Maybe have more group sessions with corps members to communicate with each other to get everyone involved.”

“An in person class would make more of an impact , however given COVID protocols I understand that online may have been the safest option.”

“Have certain individuals removed from the room while discussing certain and very sensitive topics, or have certain physical and virtual rooms kept private for certain topics being discussed.”

75.1% of Corpsmembers said they were somewhat comfortable or very comfortable participating in discussions during the workshop.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very uncomfortable	7.41%
Somewhat uncomfortable	7.41%
Neither uncomfortable or comfortable	9.26%
Somewhat comfortable	37.04%
Very comfortable	38.89%
TOTAL	

Takeaways

Key Takeaways



Impact of Training

There is significant variability in Corpsmembers responses regarding understanding power. The CLL workshop had a higher impact on motivating Corpsmembers on how to think about racism, bias and leadership.

Key Takeaways



Knowledge, Skills and Awareness

Most Corpsmembers are able to recognize disempowering patterns and are aware of resources to help them. More than half of the respondents feel they have to judge whether or not they can be themselves in situations.



Key Takeaways



Workshop Feedback

Corpsmembers appreciated having the opportunity to talk in an open setting about race power and leadership. Many extracted more expansive views of definitions and historical contexts.

Corpsmembers felt the workshop would be improved by having more opportunities for engagement with the topics and each other. Understandably, Corpsmembers felt the CLL workshop would be better if it were delivered in person.



Key Takeaways



Feedback on Facilitators

Corpsmembers found the facilitators to be engaging, knowledgeable.

More could be done to assist Corpsmembers in feeling comfortable participating in discussions





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service and conservation

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