

I'm All In Now

Cynthia Marshall

NBA Incubate SENT Seminar Participant

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In September 2017, the NBA Incubate Initiative hosted the 2017 SENT Seminar: Equipping Social ENTrepreneurs for Leadership and Change, in Leavenworth, Kansas. Designed for Disciples and their leadership teams who are starting new health and social services ministries, the SENT Seminar covers the basics of nonprofit ministry startups, as well as skills for leadership and change in our global and faith communities. Cynthia Marshall, G&me Enrichment Institute, attended as a 2017 SENT Seminar Participant and shares this reflection.



I was blessed with the opportunity to attend the 2017 NBA Incubate Initiative SENT Seminar, convened in Leavenworth, Kansas. The Seminar was held at the Sisters of Charity Marillac Center. This setting gave me permission to “unplug,” as the only electronic devices in the rooms were the ones we brought with us. I took advantage of this opportunity by spending time in thought and/or prayer about the “what’s next for G&me.”

The vision I was given, approximately ten years ago, was to establish G&me Enrichment Institute (G&me). G&me equips youth, young adults, and their families with the knowledge and tools necessary to become responsible decision makers. The program’s focus is on health awareness and social development. This has been ten years in the making, primarily because I didn’t know how to apply what was in my head and heart into actual organizational development. This, as I learned, is a “limiting belief”.

Through the SENT Seminar, I realized I am more than capable of making this happen. The workshops that were convened provided me insight into what I am capable of. It's not about knowing it all, but knowing how to access the tools and resources needed to make it happen. (Ah... A "liberating belief!") The workshop facilitators conveyed a genuine interest in seeing the participants succeed and their presentations were transparent. Although the participants were at different stages of developing their organizations, the workshops were presented in such a way that everyone could glean something from them.

The bonding that was forged during these sessions was invaluable. Time was allotted for the participants to share with, and learn from, each other. I have desired to find a mentor to help show me the ropes of organizational development. I now not only have one, but at least 20, including the facilitators and the NBA Incubate Initiative Staff, that I can call on for assistance and support. Go GOD!!!

On our last day, during the Closing Worship, I found myself feeling extremely full, to the extent that I started crying. To say this was a surprise to me is an understatement! However, as I allowed myself to stay in the moment, each tear shed came to be a release from all of my doubt, fear, anxiety and apprehension about establishing G&me. I experienced such a sense of peace. I'm all in now!!!

The NBA incubates new ministries, supporting social entrepreneurs of faith who are serving their communities in a variety of innovative ways and empowering these Disciples-led health and social service projects to focus on growth, impact, and sustainability. Learn more at nbacares.org/incubate or by contacting Rev. Ayanna Johnson Watkins, Director of the NBA Incubate Initiative, at awatkins@nbacares.org.