

Dwelling Together in Unity

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2018 SENT Seminar Participant

*Last September, the NBA Incubate Initiative welcomed its largest SENT Seminar cohort yet! The annual four-day training opportunity equips Disciples social entrepreneurs of faith for leadership and change as they nurture emerging health and social service ministries. This project, **Garden of Eden Health Center**, aims to utilize a team approach to enhance access to primary health care services and post-disaster health care in underserved rural communities.*



Psalm 133:1 (NKJV): Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

This seminar was our first experience with the National Benevolent Association (NBA). It was an effective opportunity to learn new things and clarify others, by means of the seminar topics. The topics included were the most important for the first steps of any project. Our expectation was to acquire resources and, undoubtedly, we received the appropriate tools to move the Garden of Eden Health Center Project to the next level.

Previously, Storm Isaac presented a hinderance to our attending this seminar, but it could not stop us. Then Hurricane Florence

almost affected the agenda, but the NBA staff re-engineered things and worked to provide us with self-care tips, with Rev. Angela Whitenhill presenting remotely via video as she could not travel due to her home being in the storm's path. As the Psalmist sang: those experiences make us 'to dwell together in unity'.

Rev. Dr. Dietra Wise Baker let us know that the inequality in our society is present and closer to us than we think. The local pastor that was with us then opened our eyes to see how the church has a lot to do outside the walls of our buildings. Ms. Geetha Rao

Sant was patient and took time to give us ample information about some complicated topics which are very necessary to develop our projects the right way.

Some excellent and supportive speakers, Kasi Zieminski, Jordan Bles, and Rev. LaShaundra McCarty presented on nonprofit marketing and development. They were so open to us during and outside of their presentations. Rev. Gregory Turk was the speaker with the responsibility to ‘re-wire our brain’. He encouraged us to ‘take a picture’ of where we want our project and/or dream to be, without looking back to our yesterday. He started his presentation with an end result thinking, and our end result thinking was that we cannot put our vision down to the perceived limitations of our capacity. We cannot forget Rev. Rebecca Hale, Rev. Ayanna Johnson Watkins and Larry J. Morris III, who made us feel like we were family. They showed us how we can be organized but at the same time get needs met appropriately. Kara Whitehouse, thanks for all your hard work behind the scenes to allow us be part of this experience.

This SENT seminar was an extraordinary interaction and collaboration between us. We all were volunteers from different placements and different fields. We all had a lot to do but an important thing is that we came here with the interest to get to know and to ‘connect’ each other, building brotherhood in a pleasant environment like the Union Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

We enjoyed each transition when Ayanna praised, sang and prayed, reminding us that being well is more important than being *successful*. This 2018 SENT Seminar was in the Lord's plan and it could be described as: How wonderful it is, how pleasant, for God's people to live together in harmony! That is where the Lord has promised his blessing — life that never ends. [Psalm 133:1, 3b (GNB)]

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