LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Paulo Freire famously asserted people must be “masters of their own inquiry.” With the unprecedented influence of big(ger) money in politics, it is all the more important to protect our ‘Right to Know’ if we are to make truly informed decisions. But, I think, what about our ‘Right to be Heard?’....

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NEW REPORT RELEASED
Domestic Workers Suffer Abuses Illegal in Most of Labor Force

“Home Economics offers a way out of this shameful situation, a clear course of action toward a society in which everyone’s work is respected and valued.” — Barbara Ehrenreich, author of Nickel and Dimed

Pop Quiz: What do nannies, caregivers, and housecleaners have in common?
   a. They are all considered domestic workers
   b. They are excluded from coverage by labor laws
   c. 23% of them are paid below minimum wage
   d. All of the above

The answer to this question and many more can be found in the National Domestic Workers Alliance’s (NDWA) new, groundbreaking report: Home Economics: The Invisible and Unregulated World of Domestic Work. The report details the realities domestic workers face. For the past two years, DataCenter has directly supported hundreds of domestic worker women to document their experiences. DataCenter helped ensure domestic workers were involved in every step of the research process. Domestic workers crafted and administered the survey, analyzed the results, and made recommendations based on their own experiences.

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INSIDE: New Research Justice Tool pg. 3 • Research 101 pg. 4 • NDWA Report pg. 5
NOW THAT’S WHAT WE CALL RESEARCH JUSTICE!

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Take Tracey for example. Her teenage son was swept away by the juvenile justice system. She was determined to fix this badly flawed system that nearly broke her son. She said, “when I walked into DataCenter’s training and saw the data that we had all gathered as mere ‘everyday people’ and realized that we were being taken seriously, I cried…. I felt like they were giving life to our work as parents and our hopes as human beings.” (pg. 6)

When Paulo Freire spoke, I think he envisioned faces of resilient souls like Tracey, and the domestic worker women who completed their first-ever national industry study (pg. 1 and 5), exposing that more than one out of every five domestic workers makes less than minimum wage. Irrefutable documentation of substandard working conditions is key to exposing injustice, winning allies across sectors, and moving policy agendas.

When we are truly masters of our own inquiry, we embody the dignified humanity each one of us works so hard to reclaim in the world. Now that’s what we call Research Justice!

DataCenter is committed to elevating the voices of “everyday people” like Tracey by putting community research right in their hands: DataCenter’s research resources (such as the enclosed ‘Inside Research Justice’ handout) are community tools to reclaim our destined roles as masters of our own inquiry – because liberation calls for nothing less!

Thank you for your valuable support!

In community,

miho kim
Executive Director
DataCenter

DataCenter wishes Saba farewell:

After eight invaluable years at DataCenter, Saba Waheed is leaving to work as Research Director for the Construction Academy at UCLA Labor Center. Saba’s unique research expertise on low-wage work industries, and other social justice issues leaves a legacy for DataCenter’s Research Justice work, elevating the voices of communities. Saba has helped make the DataCenter what it is today. She has collaborated on numerous projects, ensuring rigor and a thoughtful process. Saba has developed new research methods and tools that integrally involve and empower grassroots communities with knowledge and information.

DataCenter will miss you Saba!

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Knowledge is valued differently based on the source of information. Community voices are often dismissed as anecdotal and institutional data is often hidden in proprietary databases or written in inaccessible language. Yet, the ‘right to know’ and the ‘right to be heard’ can be the linchpins of success for grassroots communities engaged in social change campaigns.

DataCenter uses “Inside Research Justice” to demonstrate how organizers can think strategically about information — what it is, who needs to hear it, and how it needs to be packaged so it’s heard. More than 1,000 community members have engaged with “Inside Research Justice” since we first developed the tool for our trainings over three years ago. Share this copy with your friends, neighbors, and colleagues!
In 2005, DataCenter conducted its first “Research 101” training. Now, seven years later, it’s DataCenter’s flagship training – more robust and refined than ever. The Research 101 curriculum will be a free tool available via download from DataCenter.org in 2013!

This training curriculum builds the capacity of grassroots organizers and community members. Research 101 effectively:

• introduces the powerful history of popular and community-driven research in liberation and social justice movements throughout the world
• explores the theory of Research Justice – a strategic framework that seeks to transform structural inequities in research
• puts forward community-driven research as a powerful tool to build grassroots power
• helps participants choose which research methods will prove most effective in their campaigns

DataCenter believes Research Justice is achieved when tools, such as Research 101, are made available to any and all interested organizers and community leaders fighting for social justice.

Research 101 better equips marginalized communities to reclaim, own, and wield all forms of knowledge and information. With strategic support, the knowledge and information generated by these communities can be used as political leverage to advance their own agendas for change.

In October 2012, DataCenter co-facilitated the Southern California Tribal Listening and Strategy Session on Environmental Issues at the UC Irvine campus. A brain-child of Angela Mooney D’Arcy, member of the Acjachemen Nation and founder and Executive Director of the Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples (SPIIP), the event included a variety of co-sponsors: United Coalition to Protect Panhe; Women’s Earth Alliance; Environment Institute; Office of Civic and Community Engagement; American Indian Resource Center; and Center for Citizen Peacebuilding at University of California, Irvine.

Employing Research Justice tools found in Research 101 (see above article), the event brought together Indigenous community leaders with researchers from a wide range of disciplines to lay the groundwork for future research partnerships to protect Indigenous lands, waters, and cultural resources. Participating tribal members learned how to use Research Justice tools to envision and begin to design collaborative Indigenous-led research projects focusing on critical environmental issues affecting Southern California tribal communities.

The more I learned about Research Justice, the more it seemed to be the right framework in which to start exploring research partnership projects that honor Indigenous leadership.

— Angela Mooney D’Arcy, founder and Executive Director, Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples

It is at the nexus of community members and academics that DataCenter can play a key role; Research Justice is used to create equitable spaces, facilitating solidarity between grassroots communities and institutional researchers.

Interested in partnering with DataCenter? Contact us!
info@datacenter.org • (510) 835-4692
ANGELIQUE GONZÁLES
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SCHOOL OF UNITY AND LIBERATION (SOUL)

Angeliqve began her involvement with SOUL in its early days, first as a young participant, and then as a member of the SOUL Teaching Collective. Before arriving at SOUL in 2009 as Executive Director, she worked in San Francisco’s working-class and immigrant communities as community educator, organizer, and program director. She is a proud aunt and madrina, and a committed anti-imperialist. Why does Angeliqve donate to DataCenter? As she explains...

SOUL, a DataCenter partner and ally, works to lay the groundwork for a strong social justice movement by developing a new generation of organizers with the skills and analysis necessary to build community power and win systemic change. Want to learn more about SOUL and the amazing work they do? Check them out at schoolofunityandliberation.org

“‘There’s a lot to be said for demystifying and reclaiming research, which is a critical component of social justice organizing work. I’ve seen firsthand the impact of equipping organizers with the tools to do their work better, of strengthening fights led by the most impacted people, people of color, women, working-class communities.

Building our movement is up to us. DataCenter does the important work of building new infrastructure so that our organizations can coalesce, advance, and win justice across sectors and regions. If this is the type of movement we want to see, then we must step up when called on to support’.”

DOMESTIC WORKERS RELEASE NATIONAL REPORT

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As director of the New York City based organization Domestic Workers United (DWU) in 2003, Ai-jen Poo approached DataCenter to help conduct a city-wide survey project. The survey played an indispensable role in DWU winning the Domestic Worker Bill of Rights in New York state in 2010 – the first of its kind in the country.

Ai-jen went on to become the director of the nation-wide alliance NDWA in hopes of replicating the success in New York City on the national level. After witnessing the rigor DataCenter brought to the DWU project, Ai-jen approached DataCenter again – but this time, she wanted help producing the first-ever national report on domestic work by domestic workers.

The report represents the voices of over 2,000 domestic workers from across the country. As a result of this project, domestic workers are now organized like never before and stand empowered behind this comprehensive report. Want to know how you can support domestic workers in their quest for nation-wide labor protections? Read the full NDWA report at DataCenter.org!

“DataCenter offered us expertise in research while respecting the leadership, vision and social justice values of our membership. Together we were able to produce research that surpassed our own expectations.”

— Ai-jen Poo, Director, National Domestic Workers Alliance

Of domestic workers are paid below the state minimum wage.

23%

Suffered from work-related wrist, shoulder, or hip pain in the past 12 months.

38%

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www.DataCenter.org
In 2007, fourteen year-old Tristan Wells-Huggins was walking home from school when he noticed two youth fighting nearby. When Tristan moved in to get a closer look, he found himself face down on the pavement. Police officers had rushed the scene and arrested every youth of color in the area. What ensued is what motivated Tracey Wells-Huggins, Tristan’s mother, to devote the next five years of her life to reforming the juvenile justice system.

Tristan was charged with suspected gang activity. Tristan and Tracey were told that if they didn’t accept a plea bargain, they’d face a trial and risk having Tristan spend time in jail and his name entered into a gang database. Tracey, afraid for her child, sought out resources and allies. She was shocked to learn that prevention programs were non-existent, and that she’d have to find and pay for her own attorney. But Tracey’s long list of complaints to the juvenile justice system fell on deaf ears. No one seemed willing to listen or take her seriously.

When Justice for Families (J4F) asked families affected by the juvenile justice system to share their stories, Tracey answered the call. With support from DataCenter, Tracey, and hundreds of other families, took action by crafting and conducting a survey, the basis for the national report documenting the injustices of the juvenile justice system. Upon looking at the survey’s initial results from over 1,000 participants, Tracey commented:

“When I walked into DataCenter’s training and saw the data that we had all gathered as mere ‘everyday people’ and realized that we were being taken seriously, I cried. I can’t describe the feeling…. It just felt like, for once, they were giving life to our work as parents and our hopes as human beings.”

Taking the lead from Tracey and other family members, DataCenter and J4F have released the report Families Unlocking Futures: Solutions to the Crisis in Juvenile Justice. The report reveals how the juvenile justice system does more to feed the nation’s vast prison system than to deter or redirect young people from system involvement.

To read the complete report, check out DataCenter.org/publications.

DataCenter unlocks the power of knowledge for social change. We support grassroots organizing for justice and sustainability through strategic research, training and collaborations. We use research to help move the knowledge and solutions of communities of color and the poor from the margins to the center of decision-making.

For the latest in Research Justice, subscribe to DataCenter’s monthly e-newsletter at www.DataCenter.org