

Testimonials from the 2010 United Way Inclusion Conference

We enjoyed another wonderful United Way Inclusion Conference. But, don't take our word for it; check out the testimonials from many of this year's participants!

The United Way Inclusion Council Conference was a great event that I'm grateful to have participated in. The conference allowed me to interact with many individuals who work with or represent nonprofit boards. I gained a new perspective of what it's like to be on the board side rather than staff side of an agency. The many tools and skills I developed will assist me in being an effective board member for an agency that I'm passionate about.

I recommend anyone considering serving as a board member or anyone wanting to know what is required of a board member to participate in the UWIC conference. Every participant will walk away with knowledge on how to work effectively with others and connections with many inspirational people in the community.

Maria Harvey

The UWIC was an unexpected experience. I went in knowing that it was a great training based on what I had heard from those who had attended, but I knew very little about what it would do for me. I thought it was going to provide me some training on how to work with a diverse set of co-workers or some other typical multicultural/cultural competency training. However, what I gained was all of those things and more. I never knew I wanted to be on a board of a non-profit as much as I did at the end of this training. I gained the confidence and the skills necessary to being to pursue opportunities to use my skills to help improve the community I call home. This training was motivational, educational, inspirational and successful in every aspect I could have asked for and more. I gained some new contacts with the various participants and learned more about what it takes to make a positive influence in the community. It was a privilege to be a part of UWIC and I look forward to keeping in contact with those who participated and with the organizers of this program.

**Matt Ehler, B.A. /BHT
Coordinator,
Rapid Response Team**

Dear UWIC,

I want to thank you for letting me participate in the UWIC conference. I had a great time and learned a great deal. You had top notch speakers, great line-up. I was particularly impressed with Linda Taylor from Raytheon. I also was impressed with the great group of students you were able to generate. I met a lot of genuine people and future leaders. I am quite interested in serving on a Board now that I feel more comfortable with a well-run organization. So, keep me in mind.

**Sincerely,
Sigung Thomas A. Elias,
Mixed Martial Studio**

Diversity? What does this really mean? I thought I knew before I attended the United Way Inclusion Conference but, to my great surprise, the word means more than the differences and uniqueness separating one person or thing from another. The definition of “diversity” in the dictionary does not even come close!

I learned at the conference that diversity is a noun and a verb; and action and a way of life. It is the combination of new and old ideas, goals, knowledge, ambitions, inspirations and experiences. It is about listening to people from all walks of life and realizing that one of the best things about being alive is having the chance to learn from someone who sees the world a bit differently than you do.

I am so happy that I was part of the UWIC experience. I met wonderful people from a variety of backgrounds and learned all about their different traditions, values and beliefs. We all learned a lot, shared a lot and definitely laughed a lot!

The guest speakers at the conference were fantastic and showed us how an inclusive work environment can benefit everyone, from the CEO to the high school intern. Thanks to them, I also know what it takes to become an inclusive leader in society.

I am a proud UWIC graduate. I left the conference with more confidence, a wider skill set, and now know the true meaning of diversity.

My sincere gratitude goes out to Debe Campos-Fleenor and Candace McIntosh for giving me the opportunity to participate in this great UWIC event. Thank you!

Claret Steele

Candace & Jake,

I feel very fortunate to have been able to participate in the UWIC Conference. It is so important to provide individuals with the tools to become influential and inclusive leaders in our community -- this is something that is rarely taught. The speakers shared valuable insight and each brought something different to the table. I felt like I was back in a college classroom (which is a good thing!), but in college I never learned how to serve on a board, be an effective fundraiser, and collaboratively work in a team with the awareness of everyone's "true colors." It is rare to find an organization that has the compassion and drive to build up leaders for the benefit of others. We need more programs like this and people like you in our community!

Thank you for the wonderful work you do!

Brooke

Claret,

I am grateful for the opportunity to attend the conference. It was last minute, but between you, Candace and Armida, I was able to attend. I thank you.

The conference was very different than I expected. Yes, I finally understood the objective but the ultimate goal of community involvement and support is what came across loud and clear. The speakers were articulate, knowledgeable and experienced. They were also very inspirational, which is something that you do not find in every speaker. I was certainly motivated and my mind is racing :).

I was also very pleased to have had the added benefit of meeting the other conference participants and the sponsors of and staffers of United Way & UWIC. I'm sure we'll all be seeing each other again; perhaps not on a personal level but definitely on a professional level.

Thanks,

Cristina M. DiMurro
