

NEWS



September 3, 2014

“FOOD AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN SCHOOLS AND PRISONS” – AUGUST NETWORK MEETING RECAP & RESOURCES

by Web Master

“Don’t shoot, because I am human, and my life matters.”

These moving words, spoken by young men of color in a video projected on the screen, kicked off the August Network meeting of the LA Food Policy Council on “Food and Restorative Justice in Schools and Prisons.”



The video, produced by **Social Justice Learning Institute (SJLI)**, was a response to recent events in Ferguson, Missouri, where an African American youth was shot and killed by a white police officer. The wave of nationwide protests and vigils in the aftermath of the shooting demonstrated the need for dialogue on the relationship between communities of color, police and the prison system, and a path towards transformative healing. In this context, the LA Food Policy Council Network explored the role of “Good Food” to create

restorative justice before, during and after incarceration.

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by Web Master, September 17, 2014

“FOOD AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN SCHOOLS AND PRISONS” – AUGUST NETWORK MEETING RECAP & RESOURCES

by Web Master, September 3, 2014

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by Esther Park, August 24, 2014

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November 19, 2014

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Dr. D'Artagnan Scorza, Executive Director of SJLI and LA Food Policy Council Leadership Board Member, began the plenary by inviting the audience of 150 participants to consider different approaches to “restoring justice” in the food system, using the frameworks of food justice, restorative justice and transformative justice as theories for understanding the ways we address the root causes of conflict or inequities.

Analena Hope, Ph.D. candidate in the USC Department of American Studies,

discussed her recent investigative [essay](#) about food in the prison system, part of a publication released by [Dignity and Power Now](#) last year. Through her research, she found that the food served in prisons is often low in quality and quantity and part of a multi-billion dollar consolidated and privatized food industry. In interviews with formerly incarcerated people, she found that for many, the withholding of food was used as a form of punishment against prisoners, often causing irreparable harm on the bodies. In some cases, food care packages bought for inmates by loved ones would be used by prison staff as a means to provoke conflict between inmates. She noted that if we as a society take seriously our societal commitment to “rehabilitation,” we must reconsider the humanity of incarcerated people and the role of nutritious food in healing the body and mind.



Frank Tamborello, Executive Director of [Hunger Action LA](#), built on Hope’s argument by asking the audience: “When you come out of prison, do you suddenly become human again?” In fact, formerly incarcerated individuals reentering society face many barriers to accessing jobs, public assistance, and housing, which can contribute to high rates of recidivism, particularly for African American and Latinos. In terms of food policy, a perfect example is the lifetime ban prohibiting people with prior drug felonies from receiving CalFresh. For the past ten years,

Hunger Action LA and a statewide coalition of advocates fought to lift this ban, arguing that public nutrition benefits are an important way that people coming out of prison can re-start their lives. Just this spring, the advocates were successful in lifting the ban. Tamborello cited that the organizing efforts of those most impacted by the CalFresh ban as well as allies who were not directly affected were essential for the policy victory. Tamborello says the next step is to educate, enroll and engage newly qualified populations before the law goes into effect next spring.

TOP LINKS

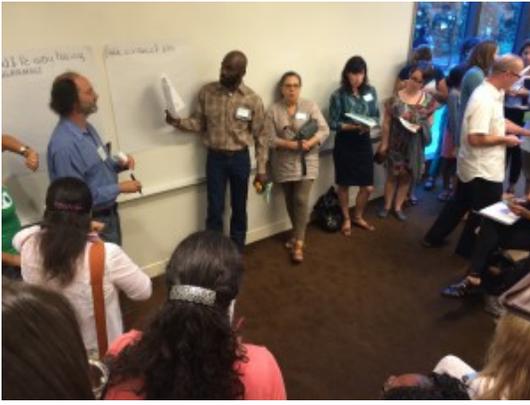
(1) [WHAT IS GOOD FOOD?](#)

(2) [2013 LA FOOD SYSTEM SNAPSHOT](#)

(3) [LOCAL GOOD FOOD ORGANIZATIONS](#)

(4) [WORKING GROUPS](#)

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Scorza brought the conversation back to youth, highlighting the importance of educational programs that create environments where harm is prevented in the first place thereby breaking the “cradle to prison” or “school to prison” pipeline faced by so many youth of color. He noted that the main statistic driving his work is the fact that one out of every three black males is expected to be incarcerated in his lifetime, and that it has significant repercussions on families, schools and communities. Scorza’s organization Social Justice Learning Institute uses food growing as a way to empower young

people, encouraging them to take control over their diet and health, and offer skills needed for food-related careers. Watch the [video](#) to learn more.



Following the panel, participants convened in three small break-out groups for further discussion and resource sharing around food and restorative justice in schools, food in prisons, and food and re-entry. Please see our [notes](#) for resources and ideas identified in these groups. As the meeting came to a close, participants agreed to continue discussions on the issues facing communities of color in

relationship to the prison and food system. *If you are interested in staying connected and participating in future conversations around these topics, please email our Network Coordinator, Anisha Hingorani at [ahingorani \[at\] goodfoodla \[dot\] org](mailto:ahingorani@goodfoodla.org).*

Network Meeting Resources

More Resources in the Room:

- * [SJLI’s Don’t Shoot PSA video](#)
- * [SJLI’s Food Justice video](#)
- * [SJLI’s Restoring Justice Chart](#)
- * [Dignity and Power Quarterly Zine #1](#)
- * [Plenary Video](#)
- * [Small Group Breakout Video](#)
- * [Meeting Notes \(Plenary & Small Group Breakouts\)](#)

Meeting Dossier: We had an impressive group of stakeholders participate in our meeting. Take a look at the [list](#) of attendees and organizations in the room.

Related posts:

1. [April Network Meeting Recap: “Food, Social Enterprise & Policy Change”](#)
2. [February Network Meeting Recap: “The Next 100 Years: Food & Climate Resiliency in Los Angeles”](#)
3. [4/17 “Food, Social Enterprise & Policy Change” Resources + Event Highlights](#)
4. [LAFPC June Meeting – “Food as Medicine: Prevention in the Era of Obamacare”](#)

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FACT 8

2% of food produced in the US is consumed locally.

Source: Civic Economics (2002)

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