The Greenlining Institute

IMPACT REPORT

Leadership Academy

Fall 2010

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Special thanks to John Gamboa and Robert Gnaizda for their commitment to preparing the next generation of leaders of color and for their foresight in founding the Greenlining Academy in 1996. We would also like to thank Danielle Trimiew for her dedication and leadership; Claudia Paredes for her flawless efforts and data collection; and the entire Greenlining staff for their strategic thinking, candor and feedback. Special recognition to all the Greenlining Academy Alumni who participated in this effort. Your reflection, authenticity and thoughtfulness made this report possible.

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ABOUT THE GREENLINING INSTITUTE

The Greenlining Institute is a national policy, organizing, and leadership institute working for racial and economic justice. We ensure that grassroots leaders are participating in major policy debates by building diverse coalitions that work together to advance solutions to our nation's most pressing problems. Greenlining builds public awareness of issues facing communities of color, increases civic participation, and advocates for public and private policies that create opportunities for people and families to make the American Dream a reality.

ABOUT THE GREENLINING LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Established in 1996, the Greenlining Academy works to develop the next generation of multi-ethnic leaders and informed community members through its leadership training programs. The Academy offers advocacy training and hands on public policy experience to students and young people seeking to acquire these skills and build vital social networks that will enhance their ability to be effective advocates for social change. Through its programs, the Academy has trained, supported and empowered over 750 young leaders.

Letter from the Academy Director

The Greenlining Institute is excited to share the results of the first comprehensive evaluation of our Leadership Academy. The Greenlining Leadership Academy was established in 1996 to prepare the next generation of advocates on behalf of low-income and communities of color. Fourteen years later, our vision has expanded to include training multi-ethnic leaders who will work across boundaries to address the most critical policy issues facing our state and our nation.

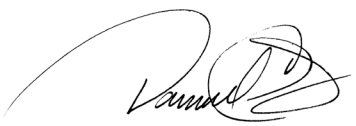
Today's leaders must have fluency across divisions of race, culture, class, sector, and geography. They must be adept at utilizing their networks to build alliances and coalitions that produce solution-oriented results. Our vision is to empower a cadre of leaders ready to enter the non-profit, private and public sectors and work collaboratively to create social change.

Today's leaders must have fluency across divisions of race, culture, class, sector, and geography.

We believe that succession planning and leadership development are among the most important activities organizations, institutions and communities can engage in to ensure their future success. Though Greenlining is largely known as a public policy research institute, leadership development is central to our mission and an essential component of enabling low-income and communities of color to determine their own destinies.

With the publication of this report, we hope to contribute to the discussion of how to continue to address the current leadership deficit and to lift up what is working to prepare the next generation of multi-ethnic leaders. We look forward to working with you, our supporters, funders and partners, to strengthen our collective efforts.

Sincerely,



Danielle Trimiew
Academy Director

Executive Summary

Greenlining's Leadership Academy exposed me to the fields of advocacy and public policy through immersion: capitol visits, hearings, stakeholder meetings, interviews, site visits, lunches, strong mentor support and guidance, letters of recommendation, continued alumni support… it has been so helpful because the support it offers is consistent and reliable, professional and effective. My project provided me with great skills – like researching, interviewing, report writing and speaking – and it pushed me far beyond the expectations I had for myself, showing me how much I'm capable of and the world of opportunity that lies before me. I would not have otherwise understood the potential I have as an individual, or my peers have as a collective, to change our society."

This report is the first-ever retrospective study of the Greenlining Leadership Academy since its founding in 1996. It presents the findings from surveying the alumni of the Academy Fellowship, Summer Associate, Legal Academy and Internship programs over the past 14 years. The purpose of the survey is to (1) solicit feedback on the Academy's draft mission statement and future direction; and (2) assess alumni's experience to determine the extent to which the Academy is meeting its goals.

One hundred and six Greenlining Academy alumni took the survey out of 200 invitees, which is an outstanding response rate that lends itself to a highly credible retrospective analysis of the alumni experience. Almost half, or 47% of respondents graduated from the Academy between 2006 and 2010; 28% graduated between 2001 and 2005; and 18% graduated in 2000 or before. This data, therefore, is a sound representation of the alumni experience over time.

It is important to note that 90% of Academy survey respondents are under the age of 35. Over eighty percent are people of color. The vast majority of them, 73%, work in the social benefit or public sectors, and hold leadership positions in government, nonprofit organizations, business, law, education and consulting.

By and large, the survey data shows that the Greenlining Academy has succeeded in meeting its stated vision and goals for developing, supporting and empowering alumni to be effective advocates and social justice leaders. Overall, 88% of Greenlining Academy Alumni feel an increased level of confidence and leadership in their advocacy and social justice work as a result of the Academy experience. Other responses include:

- 84% said they gained overall personal confidence in his/her capacity as a social justice leader.
- 89% said they gained an overall understanding of important political issues that affect their community.
- 83% said they gained a greater ability to build partnerships, alliances and coalitions to find solutions.
- 79% said they developed a greater commitment to social justice.

Three out of four alumni said they were positively mentored by a Greenlining program staff member during his/her time in the Academy. More than half, or 54% of survey respondents said the Academy experience greatly advanced his/her professional development.

Greenlining has been intentional about developing the Academy alumni network. The Greenlining Academy Alumni Association is lead by a volunteer board of directors that organizes and coordinates alumni activities through a robust listserv. The alumni network is highly valued by Academy graduates for employment opportunities, friendship, professional development and keeping informed about issues and campaigns.

The alumni network is a vital part of the Academy's success and is especially important for leaders of color because of historical exclusionary policies and structural racism today. By understanding the importance of the alumni network, and providing strategically-placed resources to support and strengthen it, Greenlining has the ability to tap into this wealth of resources and weave it into something much more powerful than the sum of its parts.

Over the last five years, the social benefit sector has slowly come to accept three sobering challenges that it faces: leadership bench strength, diversity of this leadership, and building capacity for policy advocacy. These are also three of the most indispensable basics for the success of the social justice movement. From this study of the Greenlining Academy Alumni experience, there is evidence to say Greenlining has demonstrated an exceptional ability to prioritize and succeed on all three fronts.

The Academy's success is to be widely recognized and celebrated. The question then becomes how does The Greenlining Institute, along with its funders, supporters and partners scale and replicate its programs to better address the leadership challenges of our time? The answer to this question will certainly help shape our ability to reclaim the future for years to come.

Introduction

The mission of the Greenlining Academy is to empower a new generation of leaders to advance racial and economic equity and create positive social change.

The Greenlining Academy, a program of The Greenlining Institute, offers seven leadership development programs: the Fellowship Program, the Summer Associate Program, the Internship Program, the Legal Academy, the Multi-Media Academy, the IPO High School Summer Camp, and Casa, a multi-ethnic residential program. All of the programs are geared for young leaders of color and promote multi-ethnic collaboration.

This report presents the findings from surveying alumni of the Fellowship, Summer Associate, Legal Academy and Internship programs since the Academy's founding in 1996. The purpose of the survey is to (1) solicit feedback on the Academy's mission statement and future direction; and (2) assess alumni's experience to determine the extent to which the Academy is meeting its goals.

Report Methodology
This report relied on a quantitative method to answer the basic questions. The primary quantitative measure was an online survey completed by a sample of Greenlining Academy alumni. The instrument included both Likert-Scale and open-ended questions. The general areas of inquiry include,

- Impact on self confidence in advocacy skills;
- Impact on self confidence as a social justice leader;
- Impact of taking on leadership positions in the community;
- Impact on social justice being a theme in alumni's professional career;
- Impact of Greenlining network and mentors on career advancement;
- Impact on skills and abilities related to public speaking, writing, and networking;
- Impact on skills and abilities related to coalition and alliance building; and
- Other comments, reflections and recommendations on The Greenlining Academy Alumni Association activities.

In addition to the quantitative work, two meetings were held with The Greenlining Institute's leadership team in which the theory of change for the Academy was reviewed, discussed and refined. The chair of the Academy Alumni Board was present in these meetings and provided important input to the process.

All of these activities took place between November 2009 and May 2010. The emphasis throughout the process was on letting Greenlining alumni speak for themselves, providing quantitative and narrative feedback through the online survey. The report includes a description of the sample, strengths and limitations of the study.

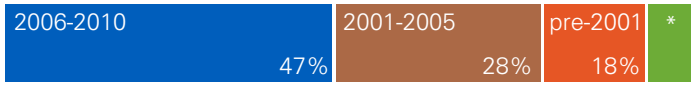
The Sample
Founded in 1996, the Greenlining Academy has trained and supported over 750 young leaders who have participated in its programs. The Greenlining alumni database of participants contains the names of 200 individuals who attended the Academy between 1996 and 2009. Of this population, 106, or 53% responded to the survey request. This represents an excellent response rate. Alumni response and extensive narrative comments showed great affinity, fellowship, and connection to the Academy and serves as a data point for Greenlining for the future.

Who Responded to the Survey?
One hundred and six Greenlining Academy alumni took the survey, which lends itself to a highly credible retrospective analysis of the alumni experience. Of the 106 respondents, 89% completed the entire survey. The percentages used throughout this report are based on those who responded to the specific questions.

A range of feedback, from critical to positive, was received through the survey and there does not appear to be reason for significant concern regarding sample bias.

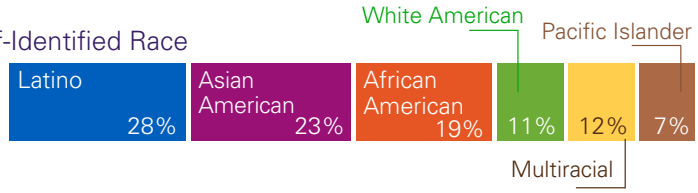
Respondent Data

Year of Greenlining Academy Graduation

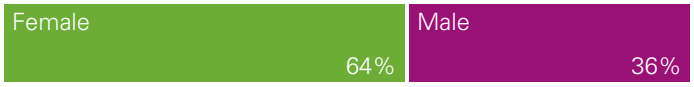


* Note: 7% of respondents did not answer this question.

Self-Identified Race

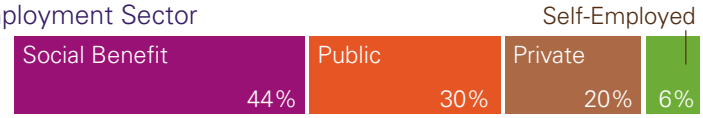


Gender

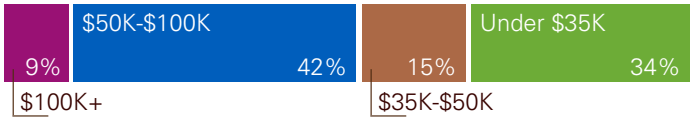


Age

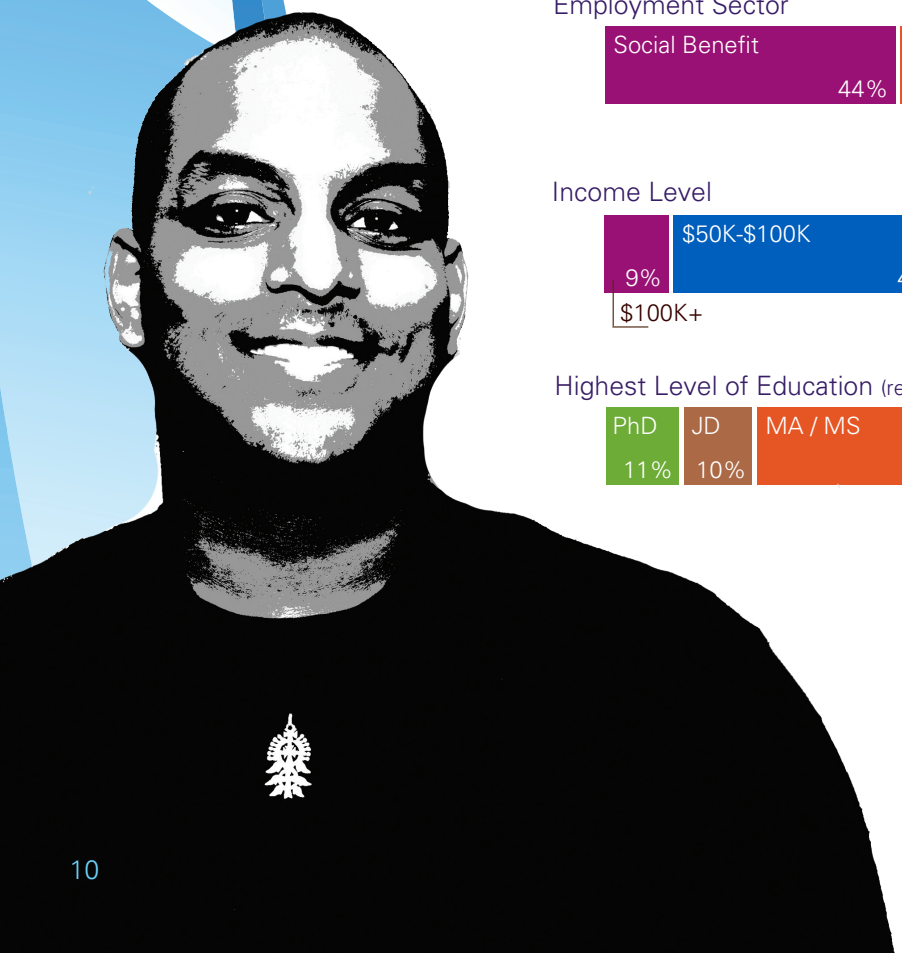
Employment Sector



Income Level



Highest Level of Education (received or working towards)



- ✓ Greenlining Academy alumni who responded to the survey are largely a group of young, highly educated leaders of color. The majority of them are working in the social benefit and public sectors and hold important leadership positions within their organizations.
- ✓ Academy alumni, more often than not, stay connected to and participate in Greenlining Academy and Institute events. They contribute time, money, and effort. They are an existing, and potential, source of talent, wisdom, connectors, donors, and mentors to Greenlining as a whole. This is a valuable source of strength for Greenlining and Academy participants.

Limitations and Strengths of the Study

Leadership and Advocacy are Adaptive Capacities
Leadership programs are notoriously difficult to evaluate since they operate in an open system where cause and effect are not entirely linear, and multiple inputs occur simultaneously. Challenges faced by leaders are complex, answers are not known and there is no single entity that has the authority to impose solutions on other stakeholders. Therefore, it is difficult, if not impossible, to draw a straight line from an input, like one's participation in the Greenlining Academy, to an output, such as position, influence and power. It is the same for measuring advocacy.

Leadership and advocacy skills are both adaptive capacities. They evolve rapidly based on changing external conditions and are therefore highly contextual. These adaptive capacities are difficult to measure with traditional metrics. Aggregated, adaptive capacities are critical elements in our growing understanding of what strengthens organizational performance and social justice movements.

The meaning and meaningfulness of the consequences of the Academy experience are likely to be highly specific to the particular person in his/her particular circumstances. While the individualized nature of learning is a basic premise of experiential education, it is still worthwhile to stand back from those individual experiences to look at the patterns of change that cut across the specifics of person and circumstance.

Retrospective
We should note that the current study is retrospective. The indicators being assessed were not measured at baseline so they do not present "pre-Academy" and "post-Academy" results. Relevant demographic information that would help us understand outcomes was not collected in the earlier years of the Academy so we cannot compare the data. For Academy graduates that completed the program more than a year or two ago, the data collection on which this report is based relies heavily on their memory and perceptions.

Key Findings

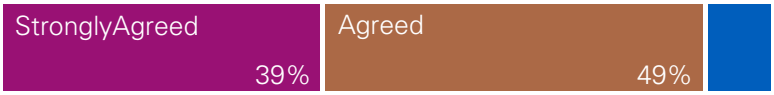
1. **By and large, the survey data show that the Greenlining Academy has succeeded in meeting its stated vision and goals for developing, supporting and empowering alumni to be effective advocates and social justice leaders.**

The Greenlining Academy's objective is to increase the participation of low-income and minority young people in policy making and to train leaders for future advocacy. The Greenlining Academy was established for this purpose and has embraced both the challenge and opportunity to build a diverse cohort of educated, community minded leaders who have the skills, tools, and knowledge to advocate for their communities and a broad social justice agenda.

Greenlining Academy Alumni feel an increased level of confidence and leadership in their advocacy and social justice work as a result of the Academy experience.

Close to nine out of ten, or 88%, Greenlining Academy alumni who responded to the survey experienced an increase in their confidence and leadership in their advocacy and social justice work as a result of his/her Academy experience.

When asked "I have felt an increased level of confidence in my advocacy skills as a result of the Greenlining Academy,"



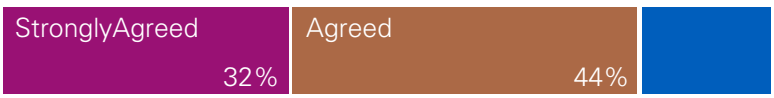
"The Greenlining Academy helped me develop confidence in public speaking, as well as learning to communicate with professionals from CEOs to nonprofit Executive Directors and public officials. I also learned a lot about networking, how important it is and how to do it effectively. I still carry with me many of the lessons and skills I learned through the Greenlining Academy. Without it I'm sure I wouldn't be where I am today."

"It helped me realize that I am stronger and more articulate than I once thought, as well as exposed me to people doing the very things that I hope to one day accomplish."

When asked, "Overall, my Academy and Greenlining experience encouraged me to take on leadership roles in the community,"

"I had no direction at all before the Greenlining Academy. I was frustrated because I didn't know how I could make a positive change. Greenlining not only showed me the path but gave me the tools I would need upon my journey."

Three out of four, or 76% of survey respondents agreed with the statement "Social justice is a demonstrated theme in my professional career as a result of my experience with the Greenlining Academy,"



"Greenlining's Leadership Academy exposed me to the fields of advocacy and public policy through immersion: capital visits, hearings, stakeholder meetings, interviews, site visits, lunches, strong mentor support and guidance, letters of recommendation, continued alumni support… it has been so helpful because the support it offers is consistent and reliable, professional and effective. My project provided me with great skills – like researching, interviewing, report writing and speaking – and it pushed me far beyond the expectations I had for myself, showing me how much I'm capable of and the world of opportunity that lies before me. I would not have understood the potential I have as an individual or my peers have as a collective to change our society."

2. **Part of the Greenlining Academy's short term goals is to increase participants' degree of competence in a set of core advocacy skills. Survey respondents were asked to rate their own progression in these competency and skill areas as a result of his/her participation in the Academy.**

There is not a single policy in place today that came about without advocacy of some kind. Advocacy is about speaking up and changing rules and resource allocation decisions of government and private institutions. Advocates work on behalf of others to make systems better or to protect what is working.

"The Greenlining Academy provided me skills as well as opportunities for networking with leaders in public policy, particularly in the Bay Area."

The core skills that are part of the Greenlining Academy's trainings include growing one's personal confidence as a leader; being able to read political issues in one's community; building multi-ethnic and multi-sector alliances and coalitions; strategic communications, message framing, presentation and public speaking; writing; time and project management; interpersonal skills; and working on project teams.

From the data gathered, it appears that Greenlining alumni have gained a great deal in most, if not all, of these core advocacy skills.

84% said they gained overall personal confidence in his/her capacity as a social justice leader

- 29% strongly agreed
- 55% agreed

89% said they gained an overall understanding of important political issues that affect his/her community

- 45% strongly agreed
- 44% agreed

83% said they gained a greater ability to build partnerships, alliances and coalitions to find solutions

- 38% strongly agreed
- 45% agreed

79% said they developed a greater commitment to social justice

- 32% strongly agreed
- 47% agreed

"Greenlining brings together amazingly talented and committed social justice advocates and practitioners. Being immersed in an environment with such intelligent people inspires and contributes to my well-rounded understanding of social, economic, and political justice."

"I was coming from a very activist background and hated corporations. While I still recognize the corporations are always operating to grow their bottom-line, I see the value of engaging them in funding necessary projects in our communities and to use their leadership/power to do good."

"As a 2004 Summer Associate, my research project was to study the giving trends of conservative philanthropy in health care and health access. This project opened my eyes to a field of practice that I had never thought about before. The experience directly impacted my career trajectory, as I now work for a foundation that supports grassroots social justice organizations."

The ability to work as part of a team is an essential professional and personal skill for any successful leader.

- During their time with the Academy, four out of five respondents reported having the opportunity to function as an integral part of a team of three or more members.

Greenlining's Academy seeks to cultivate effective time management and organizational skills in all of its participants.

- Four out of five respondents had the opportunity to learn and employ effective time management and organization techniques.

Developing effective interpersonal skills is key in a professional environment, particularly when occupying leadership roles.

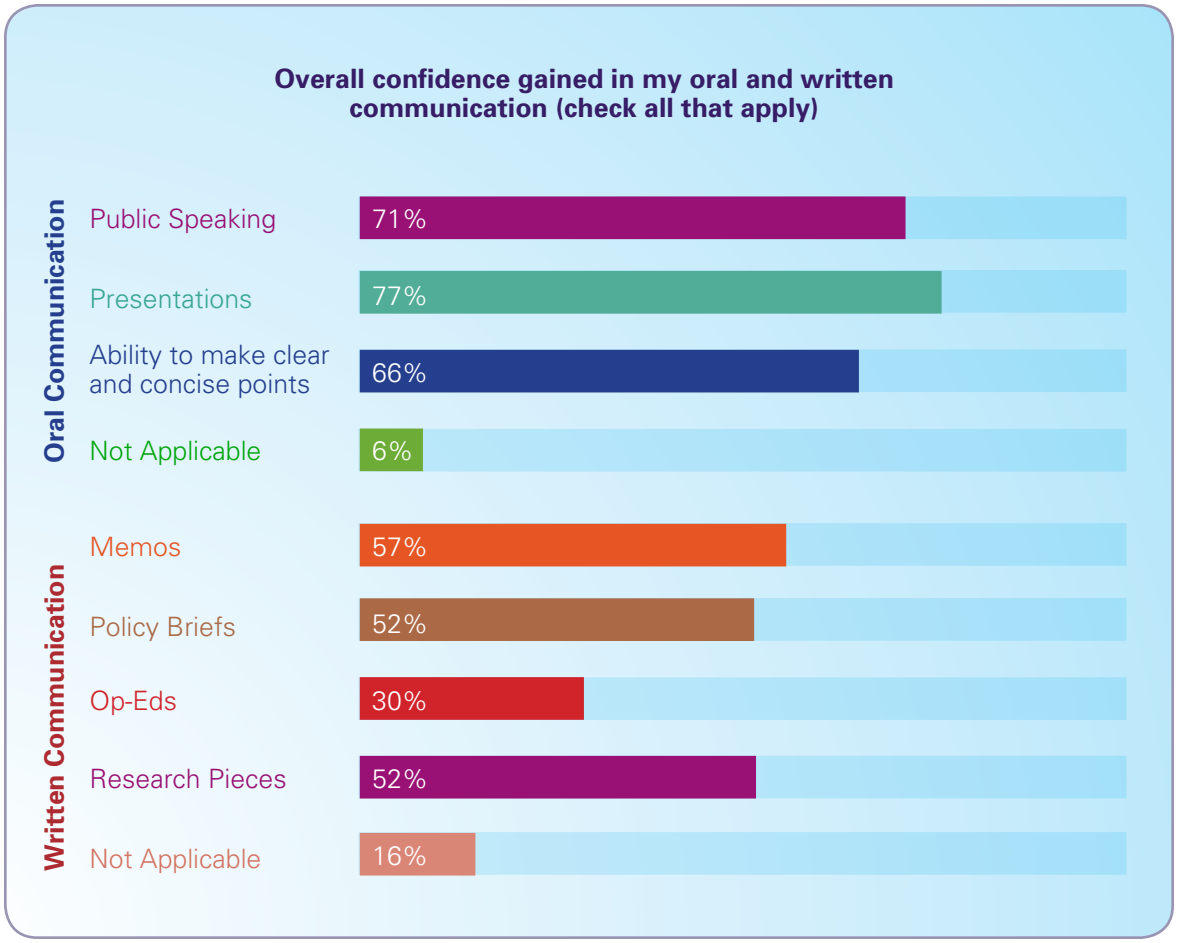
- Two out of three survey respondents reported having the opportunity to develop their interpersonal skills in a professional environment during their Academy experience.

Communications, framing effective messages, and working with the media are essential skills for public policy and advocacy. Greenlining alumni positively responded to survey questions that asked them about these skills.

To effectively advocate, communications skills are vital. Successful advocates have the ability to read the audience and understand what will move them. They are able to articulate their ideas, suggestions and positions concisely and clearly to any and all audiences. They also have the knowledge and confidence in their abilities to be prepared to engage their audience at all times.

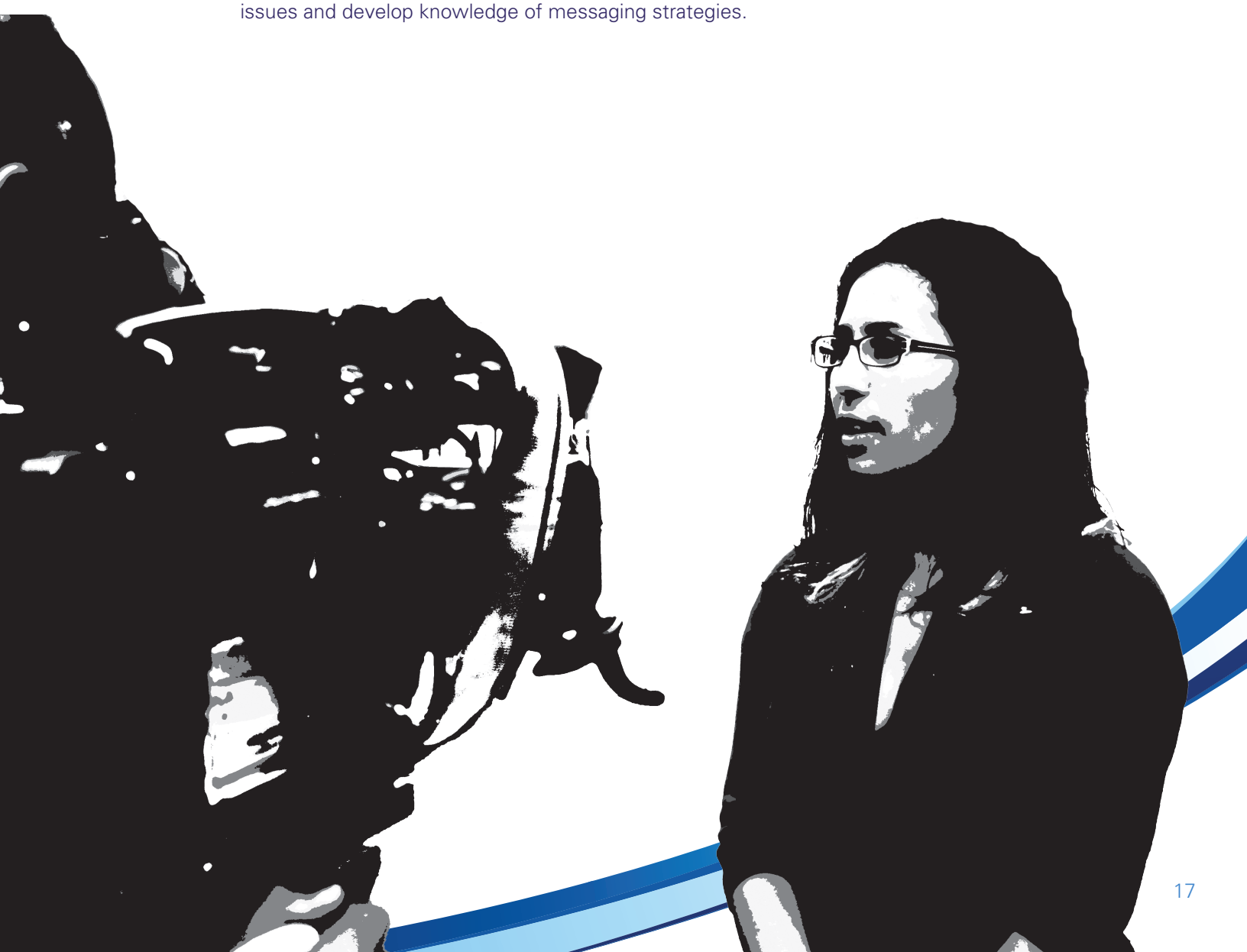
Survey respondents said they gained a great deal of self confidence in making presentations, public speaking, and with writing memos, policy briefs and research pieces.

"The Greenlining Academy [helped me to] improve my communication skills, particularly with people who are in high positions. [It] made me think about negotiations. [I] took a class on that in grad school after the Academy, which I feel I use every day in my work with government departments."



The survey asked a number of questions about alumni experiences working with the media, from learning techniques for communicating with media outlets, to giving interviews. From this data, it appears that Greenlining's Leadership Academy has developed an outstanding track record that combines communications and policy advocacy training to advance social justice. That is a rare combination.

- Over half of the respondents reported having the opportunity to learn about techniques for communicating with media outlets.
- One out of three respondents were given the opportunity to speak or give an interview to a media outlet.
- Nearly half of the respondents reported having the opportunity to interact with media outlet sources.
- One out of three respondents had the opportunity to learn how to frame issues and develop knowledge of messaging strategies.



3. **More than half, or 54% of survey respondents said the Academy experience greatly advanced his/her professional development.**

For a relatively young group of alumni, they are working in very influential places and in powerful positions; a sampling of job titles follows:

Policy and Government

- Health Policy Director
- Policy Analyst Intern, National Governors Association
- Senior Policy Advisor, HUD's Neighborhood Stabilization Program
- Director, USAID Program for International Development, El Salvador
- Legislative Aide, Office of Assembly Member
- Deputy Human Services Director
- Deputy Commissioner of Mayoral Agency
- School Board President, San Francisco Unified School District

Social Benefit/ Non Profit and Public Interest

- Vice President of Development, Public Interest Law Foundation
- Executive Director of Community Affairs
- Evaluation Director
- Director of Workforce Development
- Senior Program Officer, NYC Foundation
- Regional Chair, Chicano/Latino Youth Leadership Project
- Co-Chair, Community Benefits Advisory Committee
- Environmental Protection Specialist
- Grassroots Organizer, Immigration Reform

Education

- Professor, Ethnic Studies, Santa Clara University
- President, Telluride Association at Cornell University
- President, EWMBA Association, Haas School of Business, UC Berkeley
- Fulbright Scholar
- National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow in Public Policy
- Capital City Fellow

Legal

- Civil Rights Attorney
- Law Firm Partner, Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP
- Co-President, Women's Law Association
- Western Region Moot Court Director, National Black Law Student Association

Consulting and Private Firms

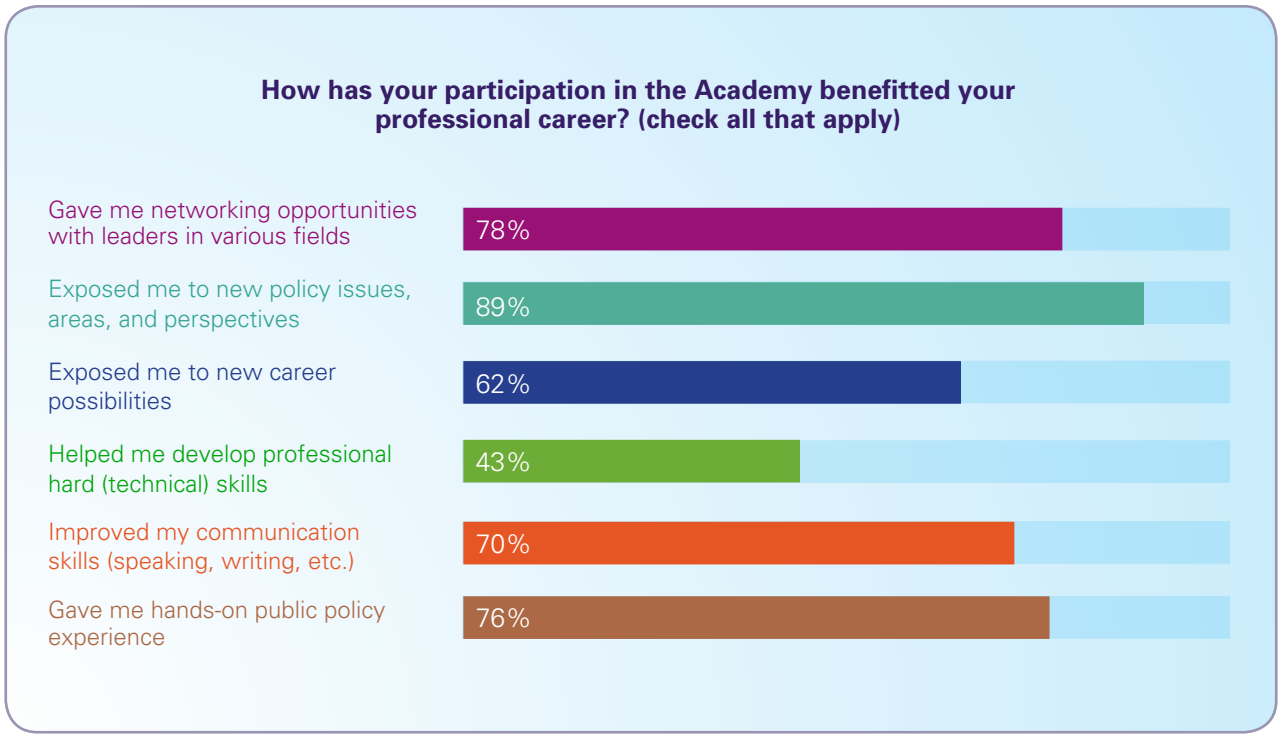
- Vice President of consulting firm
- Principle Consultant
- Senior Consulting Analyst, Booz, Allen, Hamilton

"The Greenlining Academy was the starting block for the career I always wanted. Particularly for a lawyer, it introduced me to ways I could employ my skills and training in a context other than traditional practice. I feel it has positioned me well to take my career in a number of different directions, all related to advancing social justice. It has given me the network, skills, experience and confidence I will need to take those next steps, whenever that time comes."

"I think my greatest value added from Greenlining was the ability to form relationships with other future leaders for racial equity, as well as developing concrete, applied technical skills. It helped me translate my politics and passion into a format for advocacy."

"The work I did at Greenlining allowed me to create a very impressive resume right out of college. I also learned very important advocacy and community organizing strategies."

"Greenlining exposed me to the intersection of social justice work and policy advocacy/research. Because, I currently work as a policy analyst, the Greenlining experience served as a great stepping stone for my future career decision. In retrospect, Greenlining remains a pivotal experience that greatly shaped my professional development."



4. **Greenlining's staff provided important mentorship that helped guide Academy alumni development. However, more structured time, clearer expectations, an established feedback channel, and a better orientation process will help strengthen this highly critical aspect of the Academy.**

   Mentoring for Academy participants received high marks from alumni. These mentoring relationships went beyond the fundamentals of skill building and writing policy briefs, and into the realm of personal discovery, path definition, confidence building, strategic thinking, role modeling, and behavioral supervision, all rolled into one. In a word, Greenlining mentors served as leaders.

   75% of alumni said they were positively mentored by a Greenlining program staff member during his/her time in the Academy.

"I have a greater perspective on how policy, advocacy, and law intersect. Also, I have more skills in my pocket when it comes to being persuasive and maneuvering within the system. I have no doubt that I will be using and building on these skills for the rest of my career."

"I had one of the best mentoring experiences, hands down. I couldn't have asked for a better mentor, [my mentor] was amazing both professionally and personally in helping me to find and own my path."

"The mentorship relationship continued even after I left Greenlining, which I deeply value."

"It was valuable to see young people, not that much older than I was at the time, with such poise, confidence and conviction. Perhaps more specific sessions on professional tools (project planning, how to set priorities and reach goals) would have been helpful."

"I had two, one of whom provided a great deal of what I would call mentoring at a distance. He identified what I was capable of and allowed me to learn on my own and create my own challenges, but still provided good support and direction. He always explained the why behind every assignment, so that team members had a full picture of the objective and the strategy. This was helpful for team-building as well as for learning how to form an effective advocacy strategy."

"This was one of the best parts of my Greenlining Academy experience. Learning about the projects that my mentor was working on and how that person framed issues or thought about how to move forward on an issue was very insightful and useful. It was very valuable to hear about the bigger projects that my mentor was working on and the steps required getting to the end goal."

Alumni provided specific feedback on how the mentoring could be strengthened in the future.

"I had multiple mentors. The value is that you learned different leadership styles. The problem was that some managers were better than others and at the time there was not a good way of voicing our concerns."

"The weekly group meetings were good. everyone on the same page, but more could l expected from me. Half of it was my fault that actively seeking more responsibilities or things to the group leader could have worked me a bit har given me deadlines to meet."

"The regular 1:1 meetings were valuable. personalized support and coaching to help "tra me better into the Greenlining world would'v helpful."

5. **The Greenlining Academy has helped alumni work across racial and ethnic lines, and to build multi-ethnic, cross-sectoral coalitions to find solutions.**

We live in a society that is in need of deep racial healing. For most people, talking about race and the effects of racism is not a comfortable or common practice. To be able to work with people who look, act, think, feel and talk very different from ourselves is still something that has to be intentionally cultivated. Greenlining appears to be highly successful in developing this multi-ethnic, multi-sectoral practice and nurturing a new generation of social justice leaders who are at ease with working across these traditional divides.

To what extent did you learn the importance of working across racial and ethnic lines to find solutions?

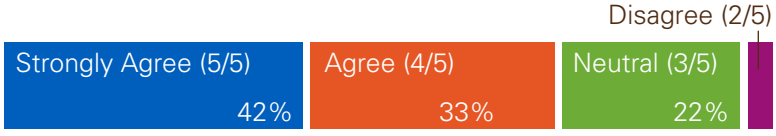
"The Greenlining Academy exposed me to a rich community of leaders who cared deeply about our country's most vulnerable populations. In short: I learned how to advocate."

"It furthered my understanding of coalition building as well as utilizing one's coalition to advocate for low-income, underserved communities. I saw first-hand how Greenlining leveraged its coalition in meetings with statewide decision makers and private sector reps (banks). The credibility and strength that Greenlining brought to these meetings helped me realize the power of coalitions. I gained a better understanding of how this power can be used to confront and to work with private and public sector decision makers."

6. **The alumni network is highly valued by graduates for employment opportunities, friendship, professional development, keeping informed about issues and campaigns.**

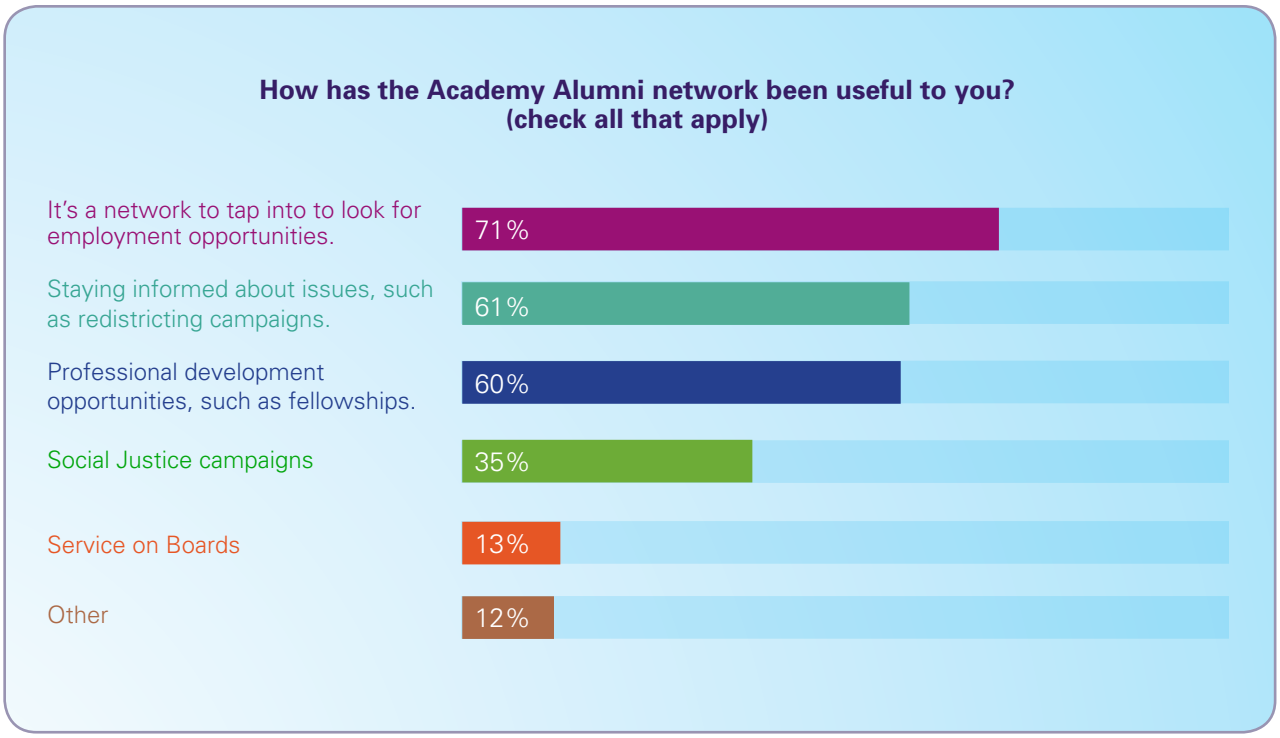
The Academy has been intentional about developing the alumni network. It is a formal group of volunteers that organizes itself via a robust listserv. It actively works on The Greenlining Institute's many issue campaigns and helps to raise funds.

When asked, "The Academy Alumni listserv has been helpful to me (networking, staying in touch with other Alumni, job posts)



* Note: 0% of respondents marked "Strongly Disagree" (1/1)

"I work in the government sector and appreciate when fellow alums send information about causes, policy issues, etc. in addition to the more routine posts. These help me stay informed on the issues most important to our communities."



The Alumni Association and network is largely a volunteer effort. While alumni interest in and support for it rates high, it will require a more formal and staffed effort to realize its full potential. In the survey responses, alumni give highly constructive and concrete ideas on how to strengthen the network.

> *"It would be helpful to have a directory of Alumni that is organized by region, profession, expertise, and other key areas. I would also like to see a strengthened alumni base on the East Coast and more meaningful and purposeful gatherings other than happy hours. Social events are great, but we also have potential to do more out here, even if it's just getting together once every other month to discuss current Greenlining issues and strategize about areas that we can support from out here.*

> *"Occasionally send out a list with the updated contact info of our members. It will remind people of our extensive network and hopefully encourage more continuous communication."*

58% of survey respondents said they would like to have a more active role in the Academy Alumni Association. There is tremendous power in this response. This group of alumni has the potential to serve as mentors, board members, campaign analysts, donors, and hosts to Greenlining events. This is an asset that the Academy, and Greenlining as a whole, ought to thoughtfully nurture and leverage.

> *"Overall, the Alumni network has been more than one could ever ask for and I hope to be more involved in the future. I'm blessed to have had this opportunity!"*

> *"I think we need to have a more centralized / convenient way of finding each other quickly."*

> *"Can we publish an Academy directory, so that we can see where people live and work?"*

"Who is where. I will be moving soon, and if there was a more centralized place to find fellow alum in other cities, that would be helpful to me or others going through similar changes. It's now a network that spans across CA and the country, and I think that needs to be leveraged and promoted."

"Is there a way to know Alumni groups in cities? For instance, Alumni in SF, LA, Chicago, NYC, etc. That may be a great way of staying in touch, etc. (social networking within that particular city, or even happy hours, get-togethers etc)."

"Find ways for the Academy to be nationally recognized. It is the best leadership training program of the half dozen or so I have participated in but it is the least recognized among them. Enlist the help of alums to help get the message out on the Academy and to tout it when necessary to gain recognition."

Alumni Recommendations for the Academy

1. Continue to evolve the Academy's theory of change. Review and refine it regularly.
2. Create a succinct narrative about the Academy – what it is, how it's different from other social justice leadership development programs and communicate the impact it has had on its alumni body.
3. Track results. Conduct alumni surveys and formally evaluate the program's impact on graduates on a regular basis, perhaps automate the evaluation survey collection process at one, three and seven years from graduation.
4. Provide more structured mentoring; set aside time; develop a clearer set of expectations about roles and responsibilities; establish a more formal, mutual feedback channel; and implement a better mentoring orientation process. These will help strengthen the critical mentorship aspect of the Academy.
5. Pay more consistent attention to helping participants hone their interpersonal skills, an important, often overlooked area of leadership.
6. Continue to evolve the training curriculum based on alumni feedback. Develop modules of core trainings and electives, such as time management, interpersonal skills, etc.
7. Formally staff the alumni network. Academy alumni are a treasure trove of potential volunteers, mentors, and donors for Greenlining to tap into for the future, including grassroots fundraising.
8. Continue to collect demographic data on Academy participants and update the alumni database diligently.

7. Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The Academy benefits from a dedicated base of alumni support. The Academy experience has successfully moved forward its stated goals. It has, among other things

- Helped its alumni gain a set of strong policy advocacy skills;
- Provided caring and powerful mentors as role models;
- Empowered a network of social justice-minded young professionals who encourage and support each other and who give each other critical social capital;
- Supported the professional development and career trajectory of a group of young social justice leaders; and
- Established an alumni network that has flourished with volunteer fuel.

Forty six survey respondents gave insightful and extensive advice for the Academy's future. In the words of the alumni:

"Keep thinking outside the box, the Academy is doing an amazing job."

"The Academy is fantastic. I'm not sure how to improve it because it was so TRANSFORMATIVE *and wonderful for me, especially in terms of the scale of responsibility I was given."*

"More technical skills such as excel, research methods or financial skills, both to make stronger public policy arguments and for personal knowledge."

"Think about what makes the Academy a UNIQUE EXPERIENCE *and how it differs from other leadership development programs."*

"Keep up the great work! Maintain your focus on BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND NETWORKING*. Maybe add more on community organizing and the connection between organizing and policy advocacy."*

"Continue to ensure that the fellows are from all over the country — not just from California."

"This survey asks about the Academy in general, but I do think there is a big difference between the year-long Fellows program and the 10-week summer program. 10 weeks is such a short period of time; thus, I think it's all the more important to think about what you want participants to get out of the program in terms of BREADTH OF EXPERIENCE *and depth in a specific content area."*

"Ensure that the DIVERSE *pool of our applicants is socially and economically diverse. As the gates continue to close for low-income students to access elite institutions of higher education, Greenlining needs to ensure that its advocates also come from the economic backgrounds of the communities we serve."*

"Continue STAYING CONNECTED *to and organizing alumni in different parts of the country. Think about ways that alumni can be more strategically involved."*

*"*THE GREENLINING ACADEMY EXPERIENCE IS GREAT*. I would only add that I understand it is difficult to come up with summer projects that are close-ended and feasible. However, criteria for projects should be more explicit - like they relate tangibly to other projects that Greenlining is working on, or an area where Greenlining would like to grow. It is important that academy participants know that their work will be used in some way after they leave."*

"Would love more opportunities to ENGAGE *with the Academy and its alumni. Alumni should all come in and meet the new Academy class each year and we should have an annual Bay Area meeting of Alumni, as well as the annual meeting at the Summit. Academy alumni should work on projects together, at least one service and one advocacy project/event per year, maybe along with the current Academy class."*

"Continue to strengthen the ties Academy participants develop with coalition members. As our non-profit leaders grow and retire, it's important to have a PIPELINE OF LEADERS *ready and seasoned to fill any gaps left, and to bring the movement into the 21st century. To this end, I also think integrating web 2.0 strategies and tools into the Academy programs is without a doubt the best investment that can be made. Also, assessing what potential post-Academy grad programs or employers are looking for and making sure the Academy participants are receiving these skills would be worthwhile."*

Discussion of the Findings

The Greenlining Academy moves its alumni beyond a social network that results in increased social capital for positive social change. This alchemy - a process of transforming something common into something special – becomes a potent combination that is a source of individual and collective power. This is especially true for leaders of color because of historical exclusionary policies and structural racism.

Exposure		**Self Confidence**
+		**+**
Access to Networks	**=**	**Career Development**
+		**+**
Hard Skills		**Social Capital**

It is clear from survey results that Academy alumni benefitted a great deal from Greenlining's unique offerings. It gives each participant the exposure to policy advocacy from a social justice perspective. It gives each participant access to The Greenlining Institute's vast network of members who serve as formal and informal mentors, which often outlasts the training period. It offers a set of core advocacy skills from public speaking to time management.

> *"The Greenlining Academy helped me advance my career by opening my eyes to endless possibilities. My time at Greenlining taught me that there are many avenues towards social justice and that I can fearlessly take any path that I choose."*

Let's take a look at the difference between social networks and social capital, and why it is such a powerful combination especially when we're talking about a group of young advocates of color.

Types of Social Networks and How They Differ from Social Capital

Social networks are the actual connections between people, while social capital refers to the *systemic or cumulative result* of social networks. In other words, social capital is the latent or active resources that accumulate from social networks.

Social networks come in many forms. One way of distinguishing them is to identify *who is involved* and *for what purpose*.

- *Informal networks* are networks built among family members and friends. These networks are often characterized by strong emotion and deep, complex bonds.

- *Generalized networks* are networks formed among people who belong to organizational groups that often share ideas, beliefs, values, or common activities. For example, a neighborhood association, or a national association of African-American journalists could be called a generalized network. The Greenlining Academy is such a generalized network.

- *Institutional networks* are networks formed in relationship with, brokered by, sanctioned by, within, or in response to directives from institutions. These social networks are often concerned with fairness of rules and official procedures. Parent-teacher-student associations or citizen and oversight panels organized by a municipality would fall into this category. In addition, most people's paid employment takes place within an institutional network— especially if they work for an institution or company with its own set of policies and procedures. The Greenlining Institute's Coalition could be considered an institutional network.[1]

If we think about it, each of us is likely to be involved in all three types of networks at any given time.

Social networks exist in every family, community, and institution, yet we often take for granted their power to affect and influence our lives. These resources - economic, social, physical, and spiritual - are what families need to create positive, meaningful lives[2]. By understanding the importance and dynamics of social networks and providing well-placed resources to support and strengthen them, Greenlining has the power to leverage these social networks into something much more powerful than the sum of its parts.

Academy alumni told us they have formed these solid connections; these connections give them inspiration, ideas, strength, open doors and guide their development. Our *social networks* have a powerful influence on us. Both profoundly simple and surprisingly complex, social networks provide the connections through which we live our lives.

The social capital that results from having a sense of belonging, self confidence and clarity of our life's purpose are essential elements in sustaining any social change movement. Likewise, the social capital created by helping people extend beyond their immediate circle to connect to a broader range of resources and opportunities can open the doors necessary for success. We heard from alumni comments the important role of mentors in the program.

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1 W. Stone, *Measuring Social Capital: Towards a Theoretically Informed Measurement Framework for Researching Social Capital in Family and Community Life*, Research Paper No. 24 (Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2001).

2 Audrey Jordan, *Tapping the Power of Social Networks: Understanding the Role of Social Networks in Strengthening Families and Transforming Communities* (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2006)

"The mentorship I received at Greenlining was invaluable. I like that it can occur in a structured environment through program management based on the Academy participant's program area(s) or through more organic, and informal means (both avenues through which I had valuable mentors while in the Academy). I have learned more and more in my, thus far, short career that mentorship can be a significant advantage in 'getting ahead.' The sooner we as advocates of change and equity learn to be mentored and mentor, the stronger our networks will be and the more impactful our movement will be."

This poignant quote reminds us that our individual, informal networks help us get by. Our social networks help us get ahead. Our social capital helps us get results.

Social Networks look different in Wealthy and Poor Communities

In wealthy communities, people are more likely to meet others who hold some institutional power through generalized networks. Contacts made at a country club, where members may be judges, policymakers, business leaders, or celebrities, are much more likely to lead to influential institutional connections than connections made at a local food bank.

Lack of social capital in poor communities and communities of color have more to do with the legacy of structural racism that keeps us from accessing opportunities, and internalized oppression that keep us apart, than an inability to build effective social networks. Given this historical and cultural context, social networks for leaders of color are even that much more important.

Social networks, such as the one we see here at the Greenlining Academy, can create a sense of meaning, collectivism and community that keeps us inspired and involved.

"It has connected me to a group of people with contagious energy and passion that I can turn to when I am confused or start to lose hope in progress for social justice."

"Greenlining provided a safe space to develop stronger quantitative skills that have made a huge difference in my professional career. It also gave me an opportunity to produce a concrete deliverable (a report) that I have been able to use during interviews, grad school, etc. Lastly, Greenlining gave me a space to network with other professionals of color -- and this network continues to benefit me in my work today."

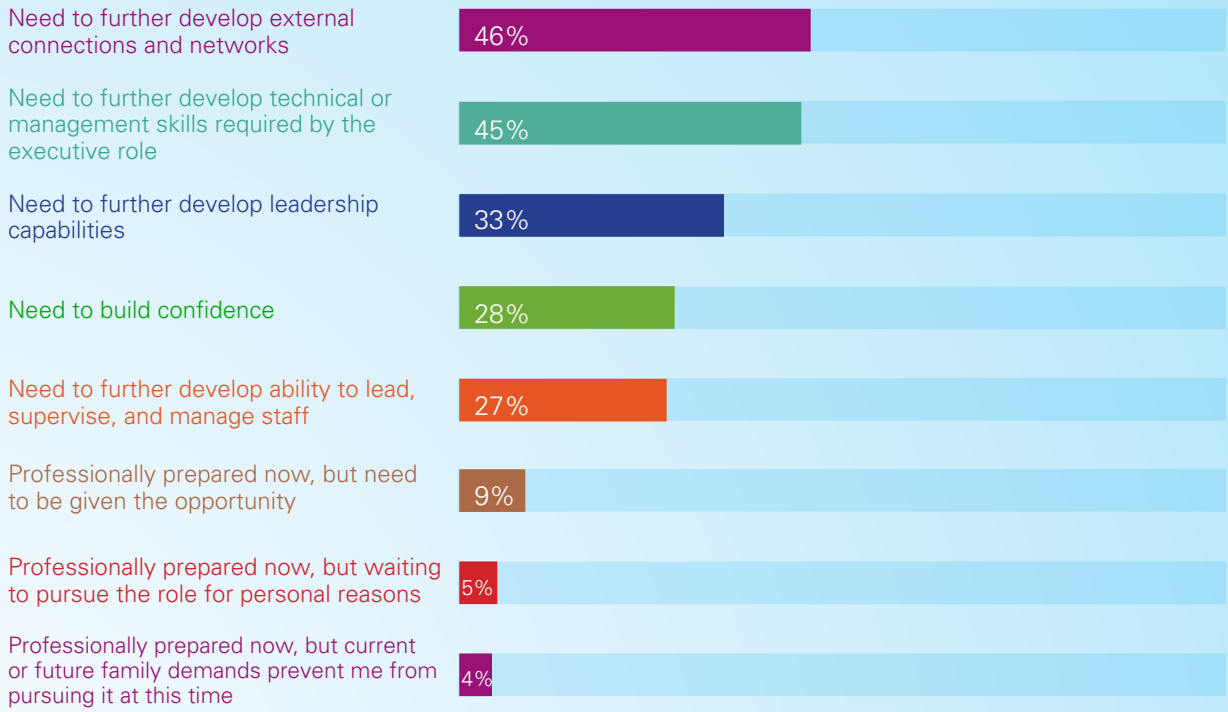
Leadership bench strength, diversity and policy advocacy are indispensable basics in addressing the leadership challenges of our time. From this study, there is evidence to show that the Greenlining Academy is meeting these challenges head on and preparing a diverse cadre of policy minded leaders ready to take their place in the private, public and nonprofit sectors.

Leadership Bench Strength

In the last five years, there have been a number of national studies on the need for more support and development of leaders in the social sector.[3] More specifically, The Bridgespan Group recently carried out an extensive study of the leadership requirements of nonprofits with revenues greater than $250,000 (excluding hospitals and institutions of higher education). The Bridgespan Group stated: "*Cumulatively, over the decade from 2007 to 2016, organizations of this kind will need to attract and develop some 640,000 new senior managers—or the equivalent of 2.4 times the number currently employed. To put this challenge in context, attracting the required number of managers will be equivalent to recruiting over 50 percent of every MBA graduating class, at every college and university across the country, every year for the next ten years.*" The Bridgespan Group has called this the "leadership deficit" of the social sector.

The chart below lifts up priorities identified by young leaders as they think about leading social benefit organizations.

Ranking of preparation needs for nonprofit executive leadership



Data from *Ready to Lead? Next Generation Leaders Speak Out*, A National Study Produced in Partnership by CompassPoint Nonprofit Services, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Meyer Foundation and Idealist.org.

[3] 1 Thomas J. Tierney, *The Nonprofit Sector's Leadership Deficit* (The Bridgespan Group, 2006); Elizabeth Chambers et al., *The War for Talent*, The McKinsey Quarterly, 3 (1998): 44-57. Jeanne Bell, Richard Moyers, and Timothy Wolfred, *Daring to Lead 2006: A National Study of Nonprofit Leadership* (CompassPoint, 2006). http://www.meyerfoundation.org/downloads/ready_to_lead/Ready-toLead2008.pdf

It is remarkable to note the top four basic areas identified by the 6,000 NGO leaders surveyed to prepare them to lead an organization – networks, technical skills, leadership and confidence – are the exact things that are prioritized in the Greenlining Academy trainings. In this report, we've examined the extent to which Greenlining Academy alumni have gained from their experience with regard to these four fundamental elements.

Diversity

To further our analysis, let's overlay these leadership preparation factors with race and ethnicity. Racial and ethnic minorities represent a rapidly growing segment of the population, but 82% of social and private sector executive directors are overwhelmingly white. Younger executives were just as likely to be White as their older colleagues, and newly hired executives were only slightly more likely to be people of color than the overall demographic.

Since over 80% of alumni survey respondents are people of color and the vast majority of them work in the social benefit or public sectors, the Academy provides the training ground for future social sector leaders of color.

Moreover, the Greenlining Academy's continued ability to attract the best and the brightest young leaders of all races and ethnicities, sexual orientation, gender and sex, economic and geographic backgrounds, and help them work across traditional divides, will lead to strengthening the foundation of a civic society. As mentioned earlier, 83% of respondents said they gained a greater ability to build partnerships, alliances and coalitions to find solutions. The Academy fosters solution-oriented, boundry-crossing leaders that have the readiness elements required for leadership.

Policy Advocacy

There has also been a significant rise of interest on the part of many foundations in policy change and advocacy. Some have called it the "grassroots to grass-tops" strategy where mass movements combined with policy change are seen as indispensable drivers to bring about meaningful social change.

The Greenlining Academy offers hands-on public policy and advocacy experience and provides opportunities to acquire skills and build vital social networks that will enhance the effectiveness of future leaders. Graduates of the Academy have access to a powerful network of social change agents—decision makers in both the public and private sphere—and an important constituency for ongoing advocacy.

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