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Introduction

Inland Congregations United for Change (ICUC) is an organization that working with congregations, schools and neighborhood institutions in San Bernardino and Riverside County. ICUC empowers faith communities to be powerful vehicles of social change, and brings people together to strengthen families and improve communities. Inland Congregations United for Change is an affiliate of the PICO National Network and of PICO California, the largest grassroots community effort in California. ICUC inspires families to make a difference in their community.

There are several organizing activities focused on community interests such as increasing access to health insurance; public safety and violence prevention; increasing parks and recreation opportunities; and public works projects such as installing public sewer systems. Among ICUC projects includes Foreclosure Prevention, Justice for Immigrants, Youth Organizing Project, School Nutrition, Education, Job for Youth, and Urban Development. Two other fellow classmates and I have been working in the area of educational project under ICUC at Ontario with a youth organizing group. Most of the group members are locally from Ontario, and most of them go to school at Ontario High School. We have youth meeting every other week to update our working process. So far we completed a parents-inspiration night with the youth group and right now we are trying to work on the voter registration process by gathering signatures in the community with the youth members at Ontario.

This research project is based on building a deeper and better understanding about youth organizing from the Inland Congregation United for Change (ICUC) organizing project at Ontario. At this main stage in the research, the result from those experiences shared by the
participants will help contribute useful information for ICUC’s evaluation process. This study is guided by one primary research question: How do youth organizers in Ontario understand their impact by their participation in youth organizing activities (ICUC)? What are the benefits and challenges faced in their role and in the program?

I think it is important to look deeply into those students’ motivations about the decisions they made to participate in ICUC, understand better the impact on them so far, and how they can gain and contribute from ICUC. My assumption for this research is that I assumed there is positive impact on those youth and gaining youth’s sense of ability for making change in their community and school. My ethical concerns will be to remain aware not to create a risk for the youth afterward and try to keep all the information from the interview confidential to protect the interviewees. I completed four interviews from people who I have been working with in the youth group. Some of them are carrying a positive feedback along with their participation in ICUC but a few members are facing some challenges while being involved with ICUC. Two of them are currently studying at Ontario High School, one is studying at a community college, and one is currently working after graduating from Ontario High School. From their interviews, I will do a thematic analysis in order to contribute useful information for ICUC’s evaluation process.

**Literature Review**

The goal of an evaluation that assesses program impact is to create opportunities for greater utilization, improvement in evaluation quality, and the maximization of learning (Bayley, n.d.). The main goal for evaluation here is to help ICUC create and use knowledge that bears on key policy and program-related decisions in the organization (Owen & Rogers, 1999). This program evaluation for ICUC assesses needed improvements and feedback by soliciting ideas internally
from the group members. In order to establish the importance of this kind of evaluation approach, this section reviews literature on youth organizing that deals with the effectiveness of organizing models on youth development.

Giving positions to young people as leaders in efforts to improve quality of life has been effective among community organizing groups. Youth organizing showed great results in terms of producing impacts at multiple levels among youth development, community development, and social change into a unified organizing cycle.

Youth organizing is a process that brings young people together to talk about the problems in their community and look for social change and possible solutions. A commonly used definition of youth organizing is, “an innovative youth development and social justice strategy that trains young people in community organizing and advocacy, and assists them in employing these skills to alter power relations and create meaningful institutional change in their communities” (Funders’ Collaborative on Youth Organizing FCYO, 2009). A distinctive feature of youth organizing is that youth are involved in developing each other as leaders. The evaluation in this paper shows that the youth from ICUC are developing a critical perspective on the systems that affect their lives, a process that has been described as sociopolitical development (Christens & Dolan, 2011).

Hellison and Walsh (2002) analyzed 26 studies that examined the impact of personal-social responsibility model (RM) on underserved and/or at-risk youth. The personal-social responsibility model (RM), a physical activity program model originally intended for underserved youth and children, has been used in physical activity and other programs for a wide range of children and youth in a number of states and several other countries. Hellison and
Walsh mainly focused on youth from high school in a low income neighborhood by some rudimentary self-reflection. The “is it working” question has been asked several times from the public, but these 26 studies enhance the theoretical and practical potential of RM as a program model for underserved and at-risk youth.

Kwon (2006) did an analysis chapter on youth of color organizing to discover the concerns and outcomes. Kwon studied hundreds of youth of color found in the Northern California Bay Area engaged in a successful youth organizing campaign against Super Jail. Those youth of color organizers’ involvement and investment in the campaign were closely tied to their personal experiences with youth criminalization and incarceration.

Another study investigated how community organizing helps build power among parents, youth, and community residents in low-income communities of color. Researchers surveyed 66 organizing groups and interviewed a subgroup of organizations. Most groups were part of longstanding citywide or regional coalitions. Researchers identified four strategic issues that confronted groups organizing for school improvement: access, legitimacy, accountability, and developing effective strategies (Mediratta & Fruchter, 2001). At the end the investigation, groups developed new leaders with skills, knowledge, and vision to raise fundamental questions about school performance and access and draw others into school reform campaigns.

Over the past twenty years, youth organizing has grown across the country. Through organizing, young people identify issues of concern and mobilize their peers to build action campaigns to achieve their objective. Youth organizing has been appreciated for its contributions to youth and community development. Warren, Mira, and Nikundiwe (2008) present two case studies that trace the more recent emergence of youth organizing as an important force for school reform. The first is about youth leaders who organize to get Boston Public Schools to adopt a
curriculum addressing sexual harassment. The second is about the adoption of a peer-to-peer tutoring program. Both cases illustrate a broader phenomenon where students reverse the deficit paradigm by acting out of their own self-interest to become agents of institutional change.

**Research Methods**

**Method:**

My method for my program evaluation involved four interviews by the participants from ICUC in the Ontario area. From my interview questions, I started by asking them general questions about the motivation of joining ICUC. I asked four major questions about their relationship building process related to ICUC and challenges they faced. I also asked them in what way they feel all the energy and time they spend by participating in ICUC has paid off. I tried to add some follow-up questions under each major question in order to draw richer feedback from my interviewees. Each interview was about 30-45 minutes long. After I completed all four interviews, I transcribed those interviews and changed the interviewee’s names for later uses for my research paper. I then used thematic analysis to find common themes among those interviews. I answered and reflected back to my research topic and focus question.

**Methodology:**

Over time, an organization will accumulate more and more evaluations, which will create opportunities for greater utilization, improvement in evaluation quality, and the maximization of learning. This program evaluation can be seen as assisting on organization that needs improvement and feedback by conducting ideas internally from the group. Several important checklists from an evaluation utilization that I found included:

- Determine evaluation objectives
- Conduct draft conclusions and debrief with project team,
- Determine who will be involved in reflection conversation
- Develop process for reflections conversation
- Circulate final evaluation report to all involved in conversation
- Conduct first reflections conversation
- Document thoughts and ideas from conversation
- Determine who should be involved in making decisions about changes at the project, program and/or organizational level
- Identify adaptations to be made including responses to the evaluation recommendations
- Development of utilization plan
- Consider use of results in donor relations, public relations and academia

Because of time limited, I did not get the chance to go over each element from the checklist, but this is a general idea on how to do a utilization evaluation. Generally, there are three steps to use evaluation conclusions and recommendations from utilization evaluation which is also the goal for this program evaluation from ICUC. Those three steps are to (1) reflected and generalize findings from the perspective of the long-term learning, (2) apply a utilization plan to move the team back into action, and (3) finally share internally (field directors) and externally (community).

**Discussion**

**Maria**

Maria joined ICUC for roughly a year. My supervisor from ICUC was the same person that pulled Maria into this big family. They knew each other from their Spanish practice in Pitzer College. The first time that Maria attended the meeting, she felt really interested. She heard people from the group talking about certain issues that the community should know about, but nobody has ever spoken up before. Maria joined ICUC during her senior year of high school. The first issue they were facing at that time was about food justice. During that time, ICUC tried to work with the school lunches and Maria told me this issue really hit home for her.
She remembered back in her school days, she had frozen burritos at her school lunch. They were lukewarm from the outside, but freezing from the inside, and it was disgusting. Everything from the school lunch they provided for vegetarians was horrible. Therefore, she was mad and she knew this has to be changed. She was tired of it, and she realized that all the students from Ontario High School deserve more.

Maria felt after she joined ICUC, she met a lot of really cool and amazing people and of course made a lot of new friends. She felt comfortable around those people because she knew that all of them are working for the same thing, they all want change, and they all want to do something bigger in life. The relationship between Maria and her family was strengthened and made stronger than before. Maria’s mom was happy that her daughter was doing something good for the community so she put more trust in Maria since she joined ICUC.

Maria’s English teacher became the teacher supervisor for the school’s ICUC club during Maria’s senior year at school. The English teacher challenged the whole group a lot in order to make them become stronger and better. He was the person that helped Maria work harder in ICUC and within school. He talked to Maria after school about her future and found Maria’s strengths to see what she can do better. Maria realized that she did change a little after she joined ICUC. Before, she just wanted to get a job and earn a very decent wage to make her family financially stable. However, now she felt like with ICUC, she had more duties and responsibilities. She said “I felt even more like, I felt like I have a duty not only to my family but to my community. Because this is the community that saw me grow up, this is the community that gives so much to me so I want to return. Like give something back. “
When I asked Maria if the time and energy she has dedicated in participating in ICUC has paid off for her, Maria gave me a big smiling YES. She explained to me that the thing about the whole food things they changed on campus was successful. But unfortunately, it didn’t stay that way for too long after she graduated from school. She heard from some of other younger ICUC youth member who were still at school said that the food got even worse than before. Maria was angry and felt this whole thing is not acceptable and needed to be fixed.

I asked her about what kind of leadership skill that she gained from ICUC could help her provides more help for the other youth member from ICUC. She told me all they need is experiences. Maria has seen life changing things and heard things from different parts of ICUC congregations. The more people she met, the more she learned. That is the only skill that she can share to her fellow ICUC members at Ontario. Towards the end of the interview, I asked her to share the most challenging thing she was or is facing so far while involved with ICUC. She told me that finding the time to balance her job and her ICUC work is kind of a challenging thing for her now. Also they face the problem of how to be more self-efficient, self-reliant and independent without the supervisor of ICUC youth group.

Maria ended our interview by giving me a statement about ICUC. She said “ICUC IS LOVE. Seriously, it’s love, because it’s like we all being together and in this really big course. Like before we are all apart and after all we are just all together. ICUC is love, ICUC is friendship. What else can I say? It’s really cool to have ICUC being part of your life.”

Jose

Jose has been working with ICUC for almost three years. He joined ICUC back in 2009 after he graduated from high school. ICUC caught his attention for doing stuff to help out with the
community. He said that he learned about ICUC by accident. He met one of the organizers from ICUC the first time at a church youth group meeting and that was the organizer’s first time too. So they started to talk and the organizer told him about everything that was going on, and what he was doing, which got Jose’s interest.

Jose was surprised that during their first ICUC action, 600 people showed up. Which he thought will be fewer like around 25 people. And since the action, Jose felt inspired to be better, he said “after that action, I was like.. wow, I can do this. I can talk to people, I can start with a conversation. It helped me push furthermore.” ICUC helped Jose to become a better communicator with others. Within school, Jose felt he finally got rid of his shyness and his nervousness around people.

He shared his transformation process with me by beginning with the youth meeting he first attended. He was not that talkative and social with other people back at that time. However, he finally realized he may be able to change himself by joining ICUC to give it a try. Months went by until he heard about the same organizer he met before starting the ICUC at Ontario. So Jose started being involved and joined ICUC at Ontario. After few months, ICUC was planning on an action again, and the organizer began to say that he needed a chair. Jose did not know what a chair does at a meeting back at that time, but after the organizer’s brief explanation he choose to be the chair for no reason! He said, “I don’t know why I choose to be the chair, you know…. Because I’m really shy at the first place and I really don’t know why I said I will do it! You know…. And so it was like my choice and how do you want me to explain it.”

He told me he still remembered during the action day that he saw more and more people coming to the church, and it became completely full after ten minutes when he began the speech.
The first thing he did was take off his glasses so that he could not see people clearly and he felt it helped him to become less shy and nervous. So that specific meeting helped Jose finally became more confidence from his first chairing experiences. And he cannot even explain how did that happened at the first place at the moment when he take the chair job!

Jose also found himself gaining respect more easily from other people after joining ICUC and having a better communication skill. He said “I guess it’s just people like you talk to, I’m not sure if I can explain it but people find out that you know you talk to so many people already and now you know how to talk to people you know, and I think that’s getting respect from people you talk to. So it’s like when people who want to earn respect, they have to start talking to people in a way.”

I was curious about why Jose started to feel that having better communication skills is important for his life. I told him that he can still be a happy shy person that having a good life without gaining and learning a better communication skill. He told me that he know he can’t change anything like the thing which is happening in his community without speaking up.

When we talked about the challenges, he told me he had never been much involved with trusting people. He said he can trust people, but it’s hard to build trust with other people to convince himself that this person is trustworthy. He said “Basically means me asking them if I can trust them. Like if I can trust you, so that my information will that… This kind of things has always been hard for me. Building that kind of relationship.” He felt the trust issue is like a mental block for him, and he knows he has to find a way to break that. I tried to encourage Jose by telling him to talk more because I felt the more you talk the more trust you build with the people along with the process.
At the end of our interview, I also asked him to give me a statement that can best describe everything about ICUC. Good and bad ones. He said “The best part from ICUC was when I was the chair for the first meeting. It made me feel wanted and feel like I actually belong, and without ICUC I would never have that chance. It builds motivation and confidence, and trust is almost there!”

**Marco**

Marco was involved with ICUC for two years back in 2009. He met ICUC through the church event from Marco’s community, and he met the supervisor of ICUC youth group. Marco did not choose ICUC, but he felt ICUC just caught his interest and he found himself belonging in the group quickly. Marco’s family completely supports what he has been involved, and he noticed that his family has not been this much supportive as before.

Marco was involved with public relations in church before he joined ICUC. He said “I was already doing public relations in church not community, but yeah… it’s like the community because church is just like the community.” Which I agreed, church is community. He was and still is the reader of his church and a lot of people asked Marco to help to get their kids involve more in the community just like what Marco is doing. He felt proud and great about this.

He said he has always been a talkative kid, and he knew he just cannot stop being quiet which I think it is great because that is something a good leader should have. Marco is good at doing public speaking because of his outgoing personality; however, sometimes he did not even know what he was talking about, which can be bad. “ICUC changed me!” he said. “ICUC has changed me a lot because it helped me get some tools to get more leadership values.”

I think it is a good opportunity for Marco to use his talent in better ways to apply to other his skills he learned from ICUC. ICUC also helped Marco to think further about his future and what
he is going to major in. He was planning to be a doctor before the whole public relations thing, however, after he joined ICUC he found out being a doctor is boring. ICUC helped Marco to find his interest in public speaking and he decided to major in political science after talking to a few people who has a lot of learning experience on this specific discipline. He also met more people who have the same interest like him than before which he feel was something that benefitted him the most by belonging to ICUC.

Marco found that doing one-to-one talks is the best way to be able to meet new people and find the interest from others. The training of one-to-one speaking helped him build a better sense about communication skills and it is also easier to earn respect by just starting talk to people in that way. Marco recently built a better relationship with his school principal after few times meeting with him from ICUC. The principal sees him as a good school leader now, and Marco felt that being encouraged from the school principal is something to be proud of. That gives him a strong motivation to be better and do better.

Marco felt like before he joined ICUC, he did not have that much skills and ability to use his public speaking talent to talk to people. ICUC helped him to use his talent to be a better leader. He said “It just opening my mind see that there are other things out there and can help you become a good leader. And ICUC was the basis for me.”

He found himself being challenged the most so far to get other people involved. He is aware that not everybody has the same mind-set as he does, and it is really hard to convince people to put more from their thoughts to help out with the community. He told me that “It takes a lot of courage to say and training to understand that other students have their own right and voice, just need to get it out. It’s the most difficult part to actually have enough courage to talk and to convince.” Also, he found that transportation can be a problem sometimes to stop him being
involved with ICUC as well. He doesn’t want to ask his family to drive him all the time for ICUC, so he was hoping something can be changed regarding the transportation issues.

Last thing about Marco is that he was not afraid to tell me he is an undocumented student who is born in Mexico but raised in United States. However, his status sometimes stopped him from putting himself more in the community. For example, he told me as an undocumented student, he was not able to join some of the international leadership meetings. That is probably a big challenge for him while belonging to ICUC.

Last, I asked him about his motivation to keep up his work while he is also aware of his special status as an individual. His answer surprised me, especially coming from a 17 year old school boy. He said “My motivation is different from the inspiration to be here. My motivation to being involved is always been my parents. They are being really supportive. My inspiration to keep doing this is that even though I know who I am, I’m not afraid to say I’m undocumented, I’m not afraid to go out and talk to people. I know that I still have a whole life to live.” That’s Marco, and he was just currently elected as the vice president of his senior class next year. He wants to thank ICUC for helping and training him into a better person and a leader.

Jess

Jess has been working with ICUC for two years since 2010. The main reason why she chose to join ICUC was because she felt as a person, she need to speak up about what is going on here in her community. She knew about ICUC a long time ago, and she knew this organization is about making changes in community, so she asked herself why not Ontario next. And then she started getting involved with the group.

ICUC helped build a better sense of public speaking for Jess. She somehow found out that public speaking is everywhere and she needs to learn this kind of ability. Jess’s relationships
with others have grown significantly, especially with her family. She developed better communications skills with her parents and other family members, teachers especially as well. She said “Things like ICUC, I put the communication skills on the top for me to practice and I apply them and I’m successes to ICUC.”

Most of Jess’s friends were concerned about how she was going to balance her school stuff while getting involved with ICUC. However, Jess told me she felt like everyone has time - they just need to find a perfect time management for themselves.

According to Jess, she also told me that ICUC has changed her. She said “ICUC has changed not the way I am or my personality, but the way I present myself towards others.” Jess found herself growing as an individual to go forward to others and speak to them. Besides, she felt it is easier to get respect from some teachers at school since she joined ICUC. A lot of teachers were surprised that this quiet girl they used to know started to do something in public and help out her community. Her English teacher was especially proud of her about what she has been involved with.

Jess surely thinks that her participation in ICUC has paid off for her in many ways. She said “It actually impacted me, I felt as an individual I did grow with every aspect of my.. not personalities but qualities.” She loves the training and all kinds of workshops about building better leadership skills. She also noticed that joining ICUC actually impacted in her life because she felt sometimes that she is growing relationships with other members. So when she sometimes felt depressed or needed any help, she knew right away that she could depend on the members for support and help.
When it comes to the challenges, Jess brought up her family again. She explained to me that her parents are both really conservative. Especially her dad is hardcore, so when he says no, there is no more conversation about it. Her family hopes she can spend more time focusing on her school work rather than involving with ICUC. Therefore, sometime it is hard for her to attend the meetings because of family issue. She felt her parents do not understand that community service is a way to influence her beliefs and especially for scholarships, like she could get a lot of chances to get scholarships from community service. She knew it is hard for her to explain to her parents what ICUC does when her parents’ mindset already been established. Her parents seemed to have some misunderstanding about ICUC; they felt ICUC can sometimes be aggressive and attack people. So it makes it even harder sometimes for her to attend ICUC meetings or events. However, Jess understood that her parents are concerned about putting school aside and focus more on ICUC stuff.

Jess’s determination seemed strong even though she couldn’t get 100% support from her family like other members did. I asked her why. She told me “When it comes to a determination, it takes everything to keep you moving forward. And believe that you will be successful.” So she has the determination that keeps her moving forward towards ICUC, and also the situation that is going on at her community is pushing her forward for a chance to change as well.

**Discussion**

Youth organizing is a powerful force for change. Young people bring new thinking, energy, and creativity to reach the needs of their community. They consider themselves the future of their communities and their movement. Creating healthy communities rooted in social justice requires organizers to provide education, technical and strategic support, and the resources necessary for those youth to develop their potential as community leaders.
After conducting these interviews I noticed a lot of similar themes among my interviewees. In this section, I focus on three themes that I found in common: benefits, change, and challenges. Most youths reported that after they joined ICUC, it helped benefit them to be a better leader, and positive impacted on their qualities as an individual. Each of them changed slightly after joining ICUC, some became better with communication skills, some started carrying a bigger picture for their future within the community. Furthermore, some challenges they are facing now in ICUC are finding a better time management skills, building more trust among the group, and developing a stronger team as a whole.

Benefits:

Youth members are gathering to try to participate in something bigger than themselves. And that, for me, is a much more impressive variable than whether or not they graduated high school. Youth organizing can benefit youth in a lot of different ways. A lot of them told me that what they are learning and experiencing from ICUC will help them be a better leader, and better person. For example, our youth noted: “ICUC helped me to actually use my talent in better ways to apply to other skills. It just opening my mind to see that there is other things out there and can help you become a better leader. And ICUC was the bases for me” (Marco, 2012). ICUC did help Marco to create a border view to see the world out there in order to bring the best back to his community. Another student explained: “ICUC actually impacted me, I felt as an individual I did grow with every aspect of my… not personalities but my qualities” (Jess, 2012). Jess earned more respect from her teachers every since she joined ICUC, her teacher was happy that she is doing something good for the community, and at the same level, Jess became a better person. Another participant discussed the topic in regards to her role and obligations with her community. “I felt like after I joined ICUC, I have a duty not only to my family but to my community.
Because this is the community that saw me grow up, this is the community that gives so much to me so I want to return. Like give something back” (Maria, 2012). Maria used to think narrowly about her future, she used to think she only have to be responsible with her family. Her goal that she has before is to get a job and earn a decent wage so her family after graduate from college so that her family can be financially stable. Nevertheless, now she felt like she has to be responsible not only for her family but her community which she grown up with this whole time. She builds a border view towards her future both for her family and her community after joining ICUC.

Change:

A lot of youth also found themselves changing in different ways after joining ICUC. Change is difficult, because in order to change you have to realize your weakness first. A lot of people, including myself, tend to choose to avoid confronting it when we find out our own weakness. We always give ourselves a lot of excuses to avoid changing ourselves. However, from these youth I heard a different side about change. They are so brave to admit their weakness and carry such a strong determination to change themselves and be better. For example, are youth organizing shared: “Everything has been better since I joined ICUC. I’m a lot better to be able to communicate more with others. After my first chairing experience from an action, I was like…wow, I can do this. I can talk to people, I can start conversations. It helped me push furthermore” (Jose, 2012). Jose was a really shy boy from the past, never involve in the community that much. ICUC gave him a chance to change, and he is aware of his communication skills have to be better in order to start convincing people to help out in changing their community. He has the sense that before making any change in his community, he has to
change himself first, which is train himself to employ better communication skills. Now, Jose is willing to speak up about his ideas, to people from his community, listen to their needs and make a bigger change.

“I think ICUC has changed not the way I am or my personality but the way I present myself towards others” (Jess, 2012). Jess felt ICUC gave her a lot of chance to improve her public speaking skills and at the same time she noticed public speaking is everywhere so she has to change in order to gain this kind of ability to better present herself and better present her community.

“I said ICUC has changed me a lot because it helped me get some tools to get more leadership values” (Marco, 2012). Marco has better public speaking skills and more experiences in public relationship than others before he joined ICUC. He used to involve lots of events from his church. Nevertheless, ever since he joined ICUC, he noticed that he learn so many tools to help him better apply his talent in different ways. He used to feel like he likes to talk but a lot of time he didn’t even know what he is talking about. But after joined he ICUC, he felt he talked differently and respected more the leadership values that have helped him become a better leader.

Challenges:

After discussing the benefits and change from those youth’s experiences, it is important to address the challenging aspect. When people are being challenged, they become better, and keep pushing their limits to meet their needs in an efficiency way. That is why a program evaluation must include a part about challenge and areas to improve in order to see if ICUC can provide any level of help to meet youth’s needs. Some challenges seem easier to fix but some perhaps can’t be helped by ICUC. One thing that was raised by many participants was the issue of time
management. As Maria said: “Right now, I’m like, thank god, I have a job, and that clash with ICUC a lot and right now that was one of the biggest challenges for me. I really want to be involving more, but it just so hard to find the balance” (Maria, 2012). Having better time management skills maybe can be something ICUC can give out a workshop about in order to help more youth who have this kind of challenge to do better.

Another challenge that was raised was in regard to building trust within the group. “I never had been much involving with the trust part. Well I can trust person, but it’s hard to build trust with other people. Basically means me asking them if I can trust them. This kind of things has always been hard for me” (Jose, 2012). I encourage Jose to talk more to the people he felt he can’t trust that much with, because I felt the more to talk to people the more trust you build with them. He knew that this trusting issue is like a mental block for him, and he has to find a way to break that. Perhaps also ICUC can provide more trust and team building activities with the group.

Another challenge that was raised specifically for Marco was about his status. “As an undocumented student myself, I wasn’t able to being participated internationally fully in/out of states activities. And this can be my challenge too” (Marco, 2012). This kind of challenge is something ICUC cannot help out with. However, Marco still carries a strong motivation towards ICUC to keep becoming a better leader even though he realized obstacles due to his status.

The last challenge that was raised was in regard to the relationship between ICUC and the parents. “The main challenge for me to get involve with ICUC is my parents. I felt that my parents don’t understand about that community service is a way to influence my beliefs, and it’s hard for me to explain to my parents like what ICUC does” (Jess, 2012). At this point, ICUC can actually do a workshop for youth’s parents in order to let them get involved or build a better
understanding for what their kids are trying to do in their community. Because it seemed like Jess’s parents are the main reason that is making it harder for her to be in the youth meetings.

Conclusions

ICUC youth group at Ontario is an intergenerational organization that provides a meaningful space for youth to plan and initiate their own campaigns to address their specific needs and to exercise leadership. By prioritizing this space at ICUC, youth emerge as a strong voice throughout their work and they create leadership for their communities more broadly. It is trendy for organizations to do youth work and increasingly foundations represent themselves as supporting youth organizing. Youth organizing means changing infrastructure, leadership, program work, development, power analysis, strategic planning, organizational structure, and a commitment to social movement building.

Youth organizing also recognizes the importance of the age bridge which gives out the chance for ICUC organizers to get involved with youth organizing process. Simply put, an age bridge facilitates the links between different generations of activities. Healthy vibrant social movements must build multiple age bridges. Age bridges challenge the analyses that have been normalized in their particular historical moments. A healthy age bridge pushes against the norms they take for granted simultaneously bringing new creativity, new visions of liberation, new voices, and new radical strategies as whole.

This program evaluation was conducted in a short period of time; however, I still found some valuable feedbacks and themes among my four interviewees. I am sure that this research can still be useful information for ICUC Ontario for their future program evaluation process. I think it’s so important to do program evaluation more specifically focused on just the youth, and also to
spend time listening to them what kind of benefits they perceive, how much they change while in the program, and of course to be aware of their challenges. Youth organizing can be powerful and meaningful because they will be the leaders for the community in the near future. It is great to have this group of youth who wants to do something bigger in their life to help out change with the community. And as an adult organizers from ICUC should give them enough space to explore their critical thinking, useful workshop and trainings to help them have chances to earn more abilities, and try the best to meet their needs by helping out with their challenges.
Reference


