Today’s Presenters

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CEO of Co/Lab Capacity, and co-author, *The Twelve Steps to a Community-Led Library*

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Building Relationships with Underserved Communities

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Presented for WebJunction
January 2024
Why relationships with excluded communities matter

EDISJ  Building community knowledge  Reaching new users  Relevance & accountability
What does an authentic relationship look like?

• Start with respect.
• Engagement, not outreach. Listen instead of promoting - learn about strengths, gifts, and aspirations.
• Transformational, not transactional. It’s about people and process, not product.
• Commit to sustaining the relationship.
Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)

- Everyone has gifts.
- Everyone cares about something.
- Asking and listening are more powerful than telling.
- Everyone has agency and shares ownership. No giver/taker divide.

Source: ABCD Toolkit from the Collaborative for Neighborhood Transformation
How do we know what our communities want and need?
How we build relationships: sharing power

- Inform
- Consult
- Involve
- Collaborate
- Empower
How we build relationships: sharing power

Inform  Consult  Involve  Collaborate  Empower
Tool: asset mapping

- Gifts of Individuals
- Community Groups
- Formal Institutions
- Stories, Culture, and History
“Nothing about us without us is for us.”

The people who will use a service or be impacted by a decision should co-create it.
Discussion
Thank you!

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