

**First Year Evaluation Summary**  
**Elizabeth Kearney Women's Leadership Development Program, 2007-08**  
Dr. Anthony J. Filipovitch

**Executive Summary:**

In brief, the participants were delighted with their experience in the Elizabeth Kearney Women's Leadership Development Program. It exceeded their expectations, to such an extent that they were unable to identify any initial expectations that were not met.

**Strengths of the Program**

In summary, five areas seem to be the signature strengths of the program, and should be further strengthened in future efforts:

1. The **strengths assessment** process worked on a number of levels. It provided a shorthand way for the participants to make connections with each other. It set a tone for the program of building on strengths rather than covering for weaknesses. It became a unifying theme that ran through the each of the sessions.
2. While the program taught a number of **skills**, the ones that particularly stand out for the participants were sustainability (conserving one's resources for the long haul) and working with conflict (instead of trying to immediately resolve it).
3. The program focused on "**significance**" more than success. Participants came away with a renewed sense of meaning and mission, and they treasured this experience. Participants were able to work with *intention* instead of reaction.
4. The program also taught them deeper lessons in **cultural competence**. The training had a transformative effect on their perceptions and values.
5. At least at the end of the program, the participants were most strongly aware of the **relationships** they built among each other and the networking and connecting that they had done with women leaders throughout the community.

**Impact of the Program on Participants**

Through the monthly assessments, observation, and the focus groups, the participants identified several impacts that seemed particularly valuable to them. Chief among them were:

- Connections, with each other and with the speakers.
- Empowerment, inspiration, confidence.
- Know your strengths and work from them.
- Skills: The participants identified a number of new skills that were particularly important to them, including conflict management and consensus-building, delegating and motivating/facilitating others, financial understanding, maintaining an intentional focus, decision-making and knowing how to take civic action.

- Of most significance
  - *Sustainability*—Keeping one’s life in balance, and shifting one’s effort toward using one’s strengths.
  - *Conflict*—accepting it and working with it.
  - “*Stretch*” goals—Going beyond one’s comfort zone, setting “stretch” goals for oneself.
  - *Presentation of self* and creating a “professional” impression that still expresses one’s self.
  - *Leadership* in its many forms and facets