

Silicon Valley Next

Evaluation Survey Findings, 2020 Cohort

Prepared by Public Profit | January 2021

About this Memo

Consulting Within Reach and the funders that co-developed the Silicon Valley Next Fellowship solicited feedback from Fellows on each of the curriculum's component, how the program impacted them over the course of this unprecedented year, how it compares to other experiences they've have had, and how it could improve for future participants. Consulting Within Reach has contracted with Public Profit, an external evaluation and strategy firm, to conduct the closing evaluation for the Fellowship. This memo summarizes the findings from the close-ended prompts, as well as the Fellows' open-ended comments that expanded on each of the themes. The appendix contains all of the open-ended comments.

Key Findings

- All Fellows experienced growth in the three areas of the curriculum –personal calling, managing people, and external social capital.
- Silicon Valley Next was critical in supporting Fellows through the many challenges of 2020. The Race and Personal Calling session was received positively, and Fellows believe it should be a permanent part of the curriculum.
- When considering future facilitators, Fellows suggest selecting individuals with lived experience in the nonprofit sector in Silicon Valley that have complimentary, diverse perspectives.
- Fellows experienced a great deal of growth in their confidence as a leader and the majority of Fellows have a stronger intention to be an Executive Director and to stay in the nonprofit field in Silicon Valley.

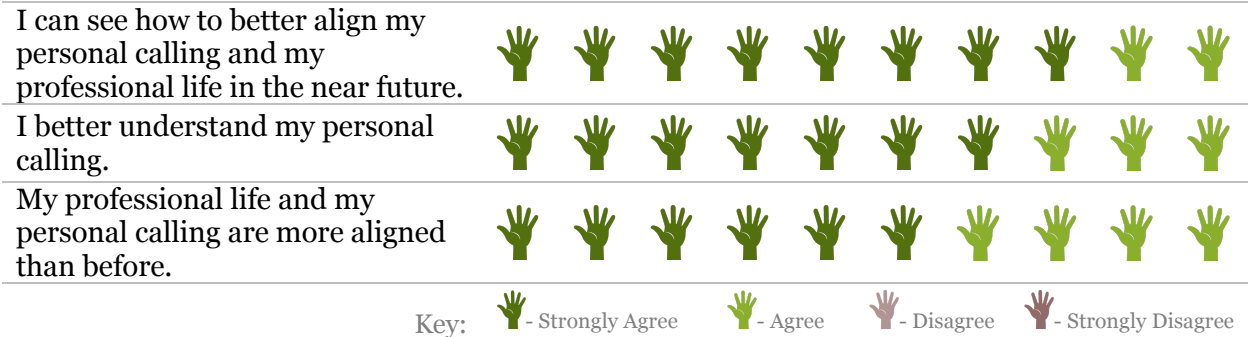
Survey Results

Personal Calling

All Fellows agreed that Silicon Valley Next helped them gain a better understanding of their personal calling and helped them envision how to better align their personal calling with their professional life (Figure 1). Fellows had various degrees of understanding of their personal calling prior to Silicon Valley Next. Some Fellows had not previously explored how their lived experience is connected to their work, while others had done previous exploration in this area.

Regardless of previous experience, all Fellows felt that Silicon Valley Next provided them with a framework, language, and opportunity to explore their personal calling.

Figure 1.



“Prior to becoming a Silicon Valley Next Fellow, I had ambition, personal and professional goals, and passions that directed and served as a guide to my development. Silicon Valley Next helped me make sense of these things, casting it all into perspective, and through the various exercises, peer/executive coaching sessions, and assignments, enabled me to see that my personal calling existed long ago. In essence, Silicon Valley Next helped me realize that the well within is deep and then they built up my confidence to go beyond the shallow to the deepest parts to see the motivation and origins of my personal calling.”

“I’ve done significant work on finding my personal calling through career coaching when I moved from the for-profit to non-profit sector before Silicon Valley Next. I felt that I understood my personal calling pretty well before Silicon Valley Next. I was wrong. Perhaps I had a strong sense of self and a good idea of what my calling was, but Silicon Valley Next really helped me activate my powerful self and leverage my gifts in a way that fit my calling and personal destiny. Through this program, I have better understood my purpose in this world and the path towards having the most fulfilling impact.”

“I never really thought about my personal calling before starting Silicon Valley Next. I just thought doing this work was important and crucial and if someone should do it - why not me?! However, I learned that how I was raised and taught to treat others really affected my longings for the world. I’ve been taught to treat everyone with respect, compassion, and courteousness while also sticking to my personal boundaries. This is what I want most for the world, especially as we all navigate working, living, and thriving together. I understand this has affected the way I lead and understand this consistently develops my most powerful self to strive to be a courageous, powerful, benevolent, and strong leader.”

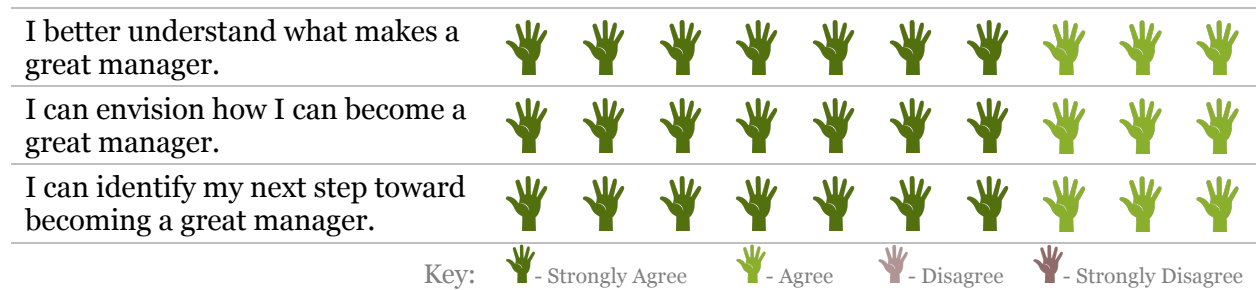
“Silicon Valley Next has helped me, for maybe the first time, understand the connections between my personal story and the work that I do. It has helped me see the ways in which my hopes for the world are connected to the way I was raised and the values I have been taught since I was young. I used to believe that my story was not

worth sharing, now I understand that it is essential to share it, and by not sharing it and not owning it I am not bringing my authentic self to my work. I have been empowered as a teller of my own story.”

Managing People

All Fellows agreed that Silicon Valley Next helped them gain a better understanding of what makes a great manager and helped them envision and identify next steps towards becoming a great manager (Figure 2). Fellows noted that Silicon Valley Next gave them both the overarching vision and framework for what makes an effective manager as well as tangible strategies to implement. Fellows noted that they learned about active listening, developing feedback loops, managing anxiety, and providing praise, among other skills. Several Fellows noted that Silicon Valley Next instilled the importance of building strong relationships with direct reports and seeing their humanity. Furthermore, several Fellows saw a connection between exploring their own personal calling and being able to support other people’s exploration of how their lived experience connects to their work.

Figure 2.



“I had no idea what made a great manager prior to Silicon Valley Next. Now, I have practical strategies to becoming a great manager and a framework on which I can build my skillset for managing others. I see the importance of having the capacity to use different strategies for managing different people on my team and the overall importance of delivering on what I told my team that I would do, which helps me to see the importance of being realistic in all that I take on, while modeling that for my staff.”

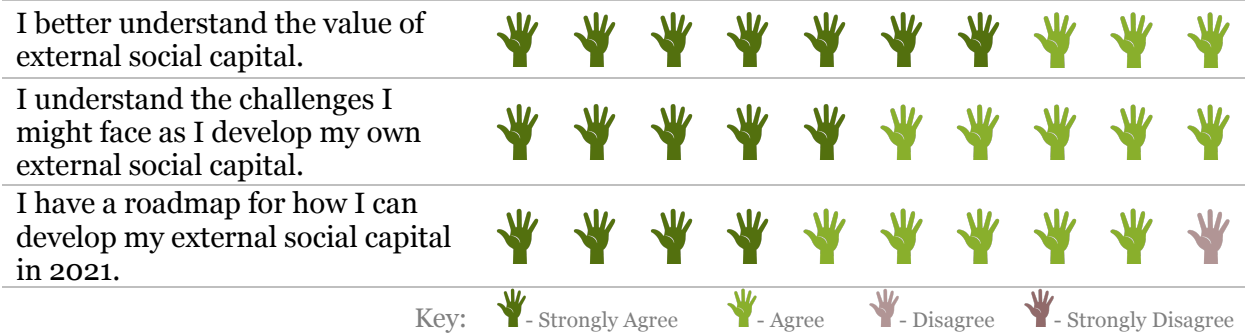
“I have realized how my personal experiences have shaped the way I manage people. Before Silicon Valley Next, I was not aware how much the two connected. While at first I thought of it as a weakness now I know how to use it as a strength.”

“I thought a manager was someone who only focused on the work and, by any means, needs to ensure the work is completed by your team. However, this can lead to frustration, burnout, and resentment. Through this program, I learned that it is important to lead with clarity, to provide consistent feedback, and to also hold people accountable. So much of being a leader means managing the feelings and emotions of your team so they are able to effectively do the work. Actively listening, providing praise, developing a cycle of feedback, and setting goals were all tools I’ve learned in this program.”

External Social Capital

Some Fellows were new to the concept of developing external social capital; these Fellows learned the importance of proactively connecting with colleagues and developing a roadmap of their social network. Other Fellows felt more confident about their social capital going into the Fellowship but noted that Silicon Valley Next pushed them to prioritize connecting with their network and think more strategically about how to leverage partnerships. All Fellows agreed that they have a better understanding of the value of social capital and the challenges they might face in developing it (Figure 3). Nearly all Fellows agreed that they have a roadmap for developing their social capital next year. In open-ended comments, two of these Fellows stated that they are still working on a plan to develop their social capital, but they now understand the importance and value of the process.

Figure 3.



“I need to put myself out there more. Rather than passively relying on a meeting to happen, I have to actively seek out mentors, colleagues, contributors, funders, and leaders in this field. I learned that leveraging my experience, both personal and professional, will allow me to confidently develop these external relationships.”

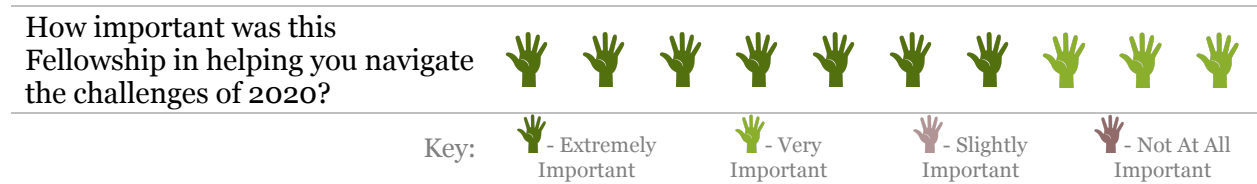
“I knew nothing of external social capital before Silicon Valley Next. Second to personal calling, this is where I learned the most. I specifically learned that I need to be intentional in formulating networks and partnerships with humans as knowledgeable resources. I learned that I can incorporate my personal calling and my story into developing my external social capital. Silicon Valley Next further gave me the confidence through peer coaching to leverage my fear of tokenization into power that I can utilize to help my peers in leadership positions open up and share their same challenges, natural talents, and ambitions to effect good in our sectors.”

The Role of Silicon Valley Next in Navigating 2020

All Fellows felt that Silicon Valley Next was extremely or very important in helping them navigate the challenges of 2020 (Figure 4). In open-ended comments, Fellows reiterated that Silicon Valley Next was a crucial form of support in navigating all the challenges that this year presented. Several Fellows noted that Silicon Valley Next was a much needed space to create new relationships, to connect with others experiencing similar challenges, and an opportunity to

undergo positive personal growth amidst a very challenging year. The supports they received in this Fellowship ultimately helped them better serve their organizations.

Figure 4.



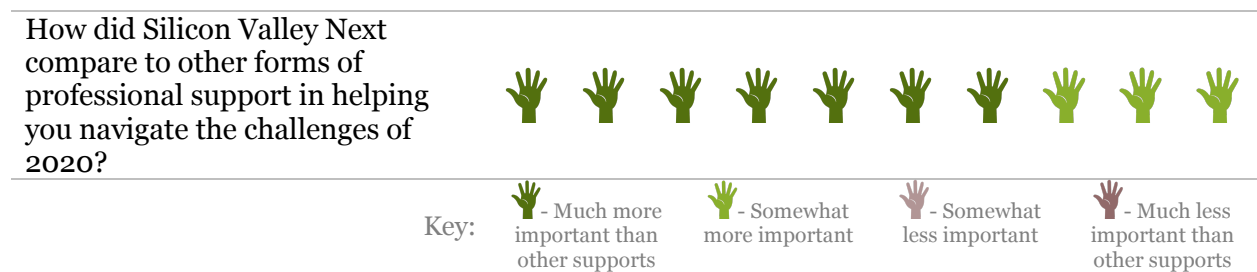
“I honestly cannot imagine 2020 without Silicon Valley Next. It's truly been my rock during these difficult times and a breath of fresh air. It's been one of the main sources of positivity and hope in my life.”

“This fellowship and the Silicon Valley Next program was a primary and significant support. Honestly, I served as a stronger leader in my organization because of the support and guidance of Silicon Valley Next.”

“Silicon Valley Next definitely demonstrated the importance of being there for my staff during this unprecedented time and really emphasized the significance of self-care. This program helped me recognize the priority of wholistic wellness when experiencing a time like 2020.”

All Fellows felt that Silicon Valley Next was more important than other forms of professional support in navigating this year (Figure 5).

Figure 5.



“Obviously, COVID-19 was the biggest challenge of the year and this program acknowledged and addressed those challenges. Rather than pretending this was a small bump in the road, Silicon Valley Next helped us with how to manage our own anxiety and the anxiety of others. While putting this into practice has not led to consistent results, I have been encouraged through this program that no one gets it right the first time. I was encouraged to take chances, set boundaries, develop policies, and learn from mistakes.”

“I didn't really have any other professional supports in 2020 outside of Silicon Valley Next. Therefore, almost all of the growth I have experienced has to be attributed to

moving into a new leadership role in my organization and then being afforded the time to reflect on this role at our Silicon Valley Next retreats. It was wonderful to have a cohort of caring individuals to listen and provide thoughtful feedback to my challenges and reflections, and in a year when systemic inequality was at the forefront of so much news and so much of our daily discourse, it was amazing to see how my cohort members - in their various nonprofit spaces - are pursuing equity in so many different dimensions. Finally, I appreciated the 'powerful self' reflection... it was the source of a lot of strength as we navigated the changes and challenges of 2020."

The Race and Personal Calling Session

All Fellows agreed that the Race and Personal Calling session should be a part of the Fellowship moving forward (Figure 6). In open-ended comments, some Fellows noted that discussing the connection between their racial identity and their personal calling was important and influential. Several Fellows noted that a major takeaway from the session was how the impact of their race is a key element to their personal calling and the work they do in the nonprofit sector.

Figure 6.



“That session was important to me because race is undeniably and inextricably tied up in all of the work we do to pursue a more equitable society, working against forces and history that have made our society intentionally inequitable. I appreciated the opportunity to talk openly about how race has played a factor in our individual journeys and sense of purpose, but also how we see race ingrained in our work and our visions for a better world.”

“Understanding the impact of our race is a key element in our personal calling, and it drives many of our challenges and opportunities. Not including this element moving forward would be a huge missed opportunity.”

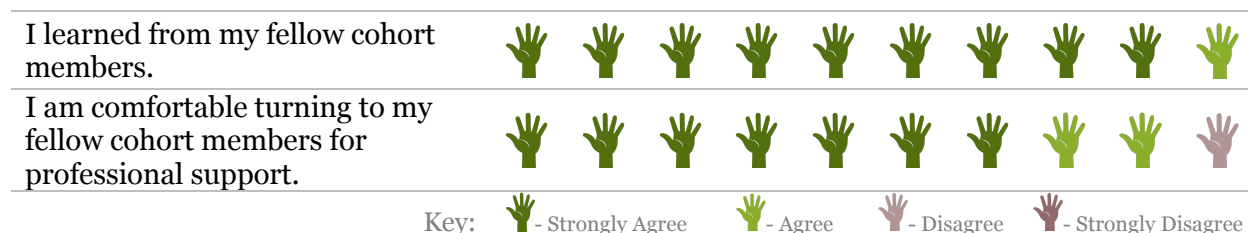
When asked how the Race and Personal Calling session could be improved, one Fellow suggested that the session could have come earlier in the series or could have been interwoven into the content of the other sessions. Another Fellow suggested topics that the Race and Personal Calling session should include:

“Talking about leadership pipelines and pathways for diverse leaders; unpacking 'professionalism'; envisioning diversity in Silicon Valley and better understanding the communities we seek to serve here in SJ.”

Support from the Cohort

All Fellows felt that they learned from their cohort members, and nearly all felt that they could turn to other cohort members for professional support (Figure 7). In an open-ended question asking about the overall main strengths of the Fellowship, three Fellows specifically mentioned their appreciation of their fellow cohort members.

Figure 7.



“The biggest strength of the Fellowship was connecting us with one another. While I am grateful to Silicon Valley Next for helping me feel more confident (and leave the imposter syndrome behind me) in my abilities and direction in my path, I am ultimately most grateful for meeting the 11 other change-makers who are doing this work with me.”

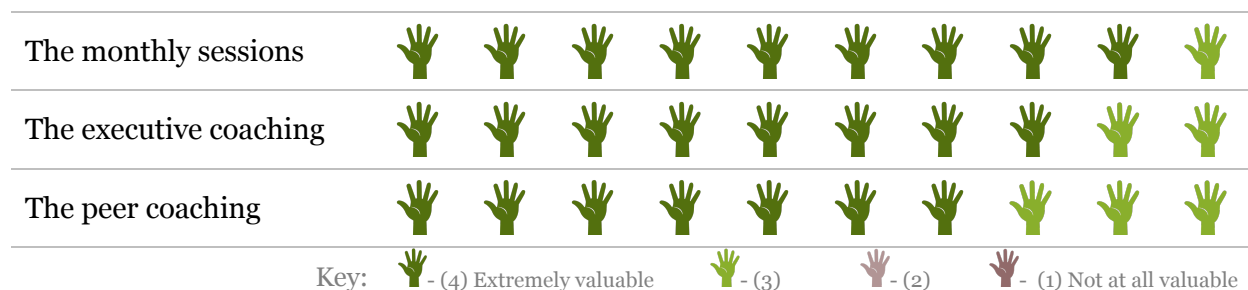
“I think the main strength of the Fellowship was the community that it created. I am so excited to see what this amazing group of leaders continues to do in the future.”

“The connection to all the other fellows is so important to hear about the work they do and the approach they take to the work has been so helpful in the way I work now.”

The Value of the Program Components

All Fellows indicated that all three program components – monthly sessions, executive coaching, and peer coaching – were valuable. The survey defined valuable as unique, meaningful to you, and useful. The monthly sessions were mostly commonly rated as extremely valuable, followed by the executive coaching, and then the peer coaching (Figure 8).

Figure 8.



“The peer coaching was a great way to further develop relationships in the cohort; to better understand the work of other participating agencies; and it helped to normalize the growing pains of stepping into leadership.”

“Both executive and peer coaching acted as a life saving device for me.”

“Executive Coaching was incredible! I loved the monthly sessions (I wish we could have been in-person) and would have liked to see our cohort even more than we were able to!”

Input on Future Iterations of the Fellowship

As Silicon Valley Next may be housed within a different organization in the future, Fellows were asked for feedback about the role the current facilitators (Curtis Chang and Kris Starr-Witort) played in Silicon Valley Next.

Many Fellows noted that the main strength Curtis brought to his role was his knowledge and lived experience in the nonprofit sector; his wisdom and insight was invaluable. Fellows also noted Curtis’ kindness, passion, authenticity, and adaptability.

“Curtis is an amazing coach. I have so greatly appreciated his wisdom, perspective, and coaching questions that he brought forward. I always felt safe talking about difficult subjects. I so appreciated the way he expressed such confidence in us all.”

“Curtis is a wealth of knowledge and has been a solid foundation for this entire experience. His compassion, strength, and leadership was very supportive and encouraging.”

“His framework is wonderful, and I cannot imagine anyone else explaining it with the grace and simplicity that he does.”

Fellows noted that Kris had a profound ability to navigate difficult conversations and to ensure all Fellows’ voices were heard. Fellows also noted Kris’ authenticity, compassion, warmth, openness to all people, and dedication to the cohort.

“She is welcoming, super smart, and she is able to help us all navigate difficult conversations. She is very inclusive and has a pulse for noting which voices are missing from the discussion.”

“Please keep Kris involved. She has a very unique way of bringing out the best in someone and encouraging taking risks.”

“The way Kris connects and brings out emotion into the work makes the work we do so much more passion driven and has helped me connect with so many emotions and feelings I was not aware where affecting my work in both positive and negative ways.”

When asked about strengths new facilitators should bring, several Fellows noted the importance of having facilitators with complimentary, diverse perspectives - BIPOC, disability, LGBTQ, veterans, formerly incarcerated, and gender were all mentioned as important perspectives.

Fellows were asked how the Fellowship can improve in the future. Several Fellows desired the in-person connection that wasn't possible in 2020 because of the pandemic.

“I feel jealous of future cohorts who will actually be able to meet in person because had it not been for COVID, I think we would have all been able to learn lots more from each other, visit each others’ organizations, and developed an even stronger camaraderie.”

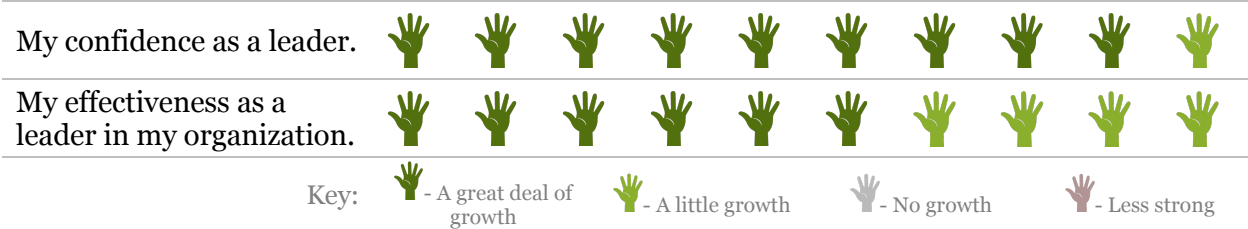
One Fellow noted that the future iterations of the curriculum could include a deeper dive into being a person of color in the field:

“I think the BIPOC perspective could be better emphasized in the discussions at the monthly sessions. The material is fine, but the discussions lacked that aspect of authenticity and extra push to truly identify the challenges that people of color face in this work in Silicon Valley. The concept of being the only person of color or intersectionality of being a woman of color, etc. in the decision-making room really needed more space.”

Impact on Fellows’ Leadership

All Fellows felt that they have experienced growth in their confidence and effectiveness as a leader since participating in Silicon Valley Next (Figure 9). In particular, nine out of ten Fellows said that they experienced a great deal of growth in their confidence as a leader, which indicates that this was a particularly strong outcome.

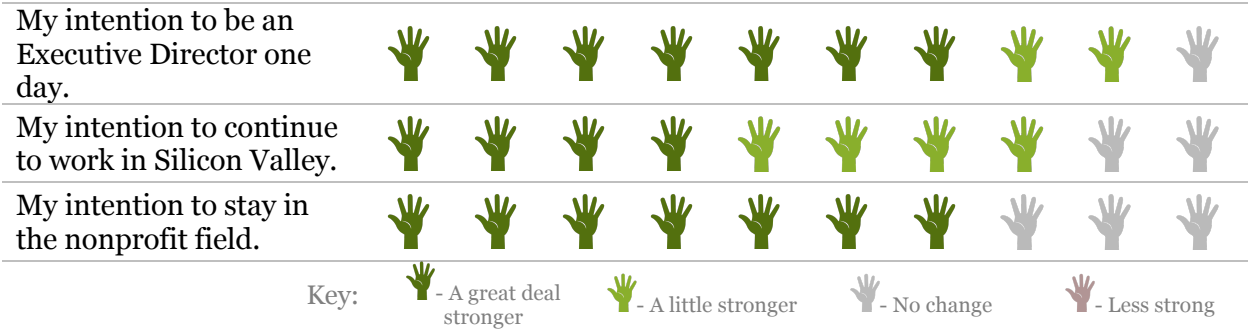
Figure 9.



Impact on Fellows’ Intentions to Stay in the Field

The majority of Fellows indicated that Silicon Valley Next has strengthened their intention to be an Executive Director, to continue working in Silicon Valley, and to stay in the nonprofit field (Figure 10).

Figure 10.



Seven out of ten Fellows indicated that their intention to be an Executive Director is a great deal stronger after participating in Silicon Valley Next. In open-ended comments, some Fellows noted that they previously weren’t clear or comfortable claiming that they wanted to be an Executive Director, but Silicon Valley Next helped solidify their capability and passion for working towards that goal.

“Silicon Valley Next gave me the time and space to finally answer the question of whether or not to pursue becoming an Executive Director one day. It is a question that I have long avoided dealing within myself and within my agency. I am so grateful that I had the space to process this; when the call came, I was ready to step in.”

“I have always been committed to staying in the nonprofit sector. But I was not sure that I ever wanted to be an Executive Director. Silicon Valley Next has shown me why it is important for me to be an Executive Director someday soon.”

“Before Silicon Valley Next, I kept my larger-than-life aspirations a secret. I didn't want to seem immodest or big-headed when I felt in my heart of hearts that I was destined to lead an organization someday. Silicon Valley Next has helped me own my dreams and find a way to share them in an uplifting way. I now carry so much pride with me when I share that I want to be an Executive Director someday.”

“I am committed to increasing the scope of my leadership in my organization but for now, I have my sights set on leading our programming, maybe not extending all the way to executive directorship quite yet. This is a big change from where I started though, when I was actually thinking that it was a pretty sure thing I would be leaving [my current organization] soon to start as an independent consultant.”

Seven Fellows indicated that their intention to stay in the nonprofit field is a great deal stronger after participating in Silicon Valley Next. Three Fellows indicated that their intention to stay in the nonprofit field has not changed. In open-ended comments, one of the Fellows that indicated no change said that their commitment to stay in the nonprofit field has always been strong, and another Fellow said that working in the field is tough and they're not sure how much longer they intend to stay. Fewer Fellows experienced a great deal of change in their intention to stay in Silicon Valley, though still eight out of ten Fellows said that their intention to stay in the sector is stronger than before. Fellows didn't comment directly on their experience in Silicon Valley in the space provided.

“So much of my confidence and dedication to this non-profit field is because of Silicon Valley Next.”

“Working in nonprofit is tough. I question how much longer I intend to stay in the nonprofit realm even if I leave. Silicon Valley Next did give me some tools to use if I ultimately decide to leave nonprofit services. My confidence over this last year has grown and I feel I am in a place where I can continue to use my authentic voice to continue to develop my skills as a leader.”

Appendix: All open-ended comments

Please describe how Silicon Valley Next has contributed to your understanding of your personal calling:

It has provided a framework, language, and an opportunity and space to do the necessary connections so the understanding sits on lived experience and it's rooted in the work that we currently do.

Prior to becoming an Silicon Valley Next Fellow, I had ambition, personal and professional goals, and passions that directed and served as a guide to my development. Silicon Valley Next helped me make sense of these things, casting it all into perspective, and through the various exercises, peer/executive coaching sessions, and assignments, enabled me to see that my personal calling existed long ago. In essence, Silicon Valley Next helped me realize that the well within is deep and then they built up my confidence to go beyond the shallow to the deepest parts to see the motivation and origins of my personal calling.

I have the good fortunate of being intuitive and aware. I've done significant work on finding my personal calling through career coaching when I moved from the for-profit to non-profit sector before. I felt that I understood my personal calling pretty well before Silicon Valley Next. I was wrong. Perhaps I had a strong sense of self and a good idea of what my calling was; but Silicon Valley Next really helped me activate my powerful self and leverage my gifts in a way that fit my calling and personal destiny. Through this program I have better understood my purpose in this world and the path towards having the most fulfilling impact. I recognize my strengths and weakness and have found balance in who I am as a leader and as part of a team.

The module on personal calling helped me acknowledge, embrace, and amplify my strengths (or powerful self). The subsequent executive coaching session helped me identify when I'm not showing up and most importantly why and how to pivot when those triggers are activated. This was a significant turning point for me.

I never really thought about my personal calling before starting Silicon Valley Next. I just thought doing this work was important and crucial and if someone should do it - why not me?! However, I learned that how I was raised and taught to treat others really affected my longings for the world. I've been taught to treat everyone with respect, compassion, and courteousness while also sticking to my personal boundaries. This is what i want most for the world, especially as we all navigate working, living, and thriving together. I understand this has affected the way I lead and understand this consistently develops my most powerful self to strive to be a courageous, powerful, benevolent, and strong leader.

Silicon Valley Next gave me the space for self reflection and examination of the world that I can create for myself and for others. It was so valuable to be given the opportunity to further flush out personal values and identify what grounds us in the work we are doing.

I now understand the depths of myself that my personal calling is tied to. My personal calling is not just a professional preference. It is a calling on my life that is based on my unique perspective and experiences.

I feel much more connected to my personal calling and feel aware of it and will use it to help me in my career and approach to the work I do from here on out.

Silicon Valley Next has helped me, for maybe the first time, understand the connections between my personal story and the work that I do. It has helped me see the ways in which my hopes for the world are connected to the way I was raised and the values I have been taught since I was young. I used to believe that my story was not worth sharing, now I understand that it is essential to share it, and by not sharing it and not owning it I am not bringing my authentic self to my work. I have been empowered as a teller of my own story.

Silicon Valley Next has helped me amplify my powerful self and authentic self. This journey has helped me become more committed to the values and work in non profit.

Please describe how you changed as a manager as result of participating in Silicon Valley Next:

Not only have we discussed specific tools but a vision was offered and discussed. For me this is a stronger approach since tools (how to) could be lost in their application if you vision (why) is not on point.

Silicon Valley Next helped me see the value in recognizing that the personal calling of each of my subordinates are just as important as my own personal calling. I became more attentive to the professional and "human" needs of the people I manage. I started implementing a feedback system from me as a manager to my team that communicated compassionate acceptance. For my internal growth as a manager, I immediately started being aware of my need to balance confidence and humility in my leadership and management style.

While I do not have any current direct-reports, I have managed interns, volunteers, projects, teams, and boards. Silicon Valley Next really helped me contextualize those experiences and tap into my innate gifts and weaknesses when it comes to managing others. I've recognized how I fit into a participatory style of leadership and how I can use

different styles to maximize abilities and confidence. Silicon Valley Next has also caused me to think critically about being a bridge between personal calling and the mission of the organization. I am excited (and nervous) to manage people directly and Silicon Valley Next has given me the tools I need to take the plunge with confidence and humility.

I've seen the value of growing people toward their personal calling and building a bridge between that personal calling and the needs of the organization. Understanding the need to manage with different styles based on the situation and practicing this with intention.

I thought a manager was someone who only focused on the work and, by any means, needs to ensure the work is completed by your team. However, this can lead to frustration, burnout, and resentment. Through this program, I learned that it is important to lead with clarity, to provide consistent feedback, and to also hold people accountable. So much of being a leader means managing the feelings and emotions of your team so they are able to effectively do the work. Actively listening, providing praise, developing a cycle of feedback, and setting goals were all tools I've learned in this program.

I am practicing active listening with my direct reports. I find that by practicing this; I am better able to understand what direct reports need, and I am able to better engage them in conversations about their own personal growth and development.

I had no idea what made a great manager prior to Silicon Valley Next. Now, I have practical strategies to becoming a great manager and a framework on which I can build my skillset for managing others. I see the importance of having the capacity to use different strategies for managing different people on my team and the overall importance of delivering on what I told my team that I would do, which helps me to see the importance of being realistic in all that I take on, while modeling that for my staff.

I have realized how my personal experiences have shaped the way I manage people. Before Silicon Valley Next I was not aware how much the two connected. While at first I thought of it as a weakness now I know how to use it as a strength.

Silicon Valley Next taught me a lot about management styles and techniques, and helped me consider the ways in which I can apply those techniques in my own specific context. But I think the thing I will carry with me is just the simple knowledge - revisited time and again in our monthly retreats - that relationships matter most when it comes to effective management. Investing in people, helping them grow in a way that is sustainable and aligned with their personal story and goals, these are the marks of a strong manager. Silicon Valley Next has helped me view my rise into management not as an opportunity to further my own career goals but as an opportunity to build stronger teams, and ensure that the needs and stories of those doing direct service work are being communicated and heard at the highest levels of our organization. I can see myself becoming a manager who puts people first, and who strives to keep my finger on the pulse of our direct service work.

I am more aware of my ability to hold anxiety and loss and be able to better communicate and bridge the need of my staff with the vision of my organization.

Please describe how Silicon Valley Next has contributed to the development your external social capital:

I'm working a road map, but the fact that I know I need one speaks volume my current understanding of social capital thanks to the work we did in this group.

I knew nothing of external social capital before Silicon Valley Next. Second to personal calling, this is where I learned the most. I specifically learned that I need to be intentional in formulating networks and partnerships with humans as knowledgeable resources. I learned that I can incorporate my personal calling and my story into developing my external social capital. Silicon Valley Next further gave me the confidence through peer coaching to leverage my fear of tokenization into power that I can utilize to help my peers in leadership positions open up and share their same challenges, natural talents, and ambitions to effect good in our sectors.

While I am fortunate to have a blossoming network of colleagues, friends, and mentors as part of my own social network, Silicon Valley Next helped me to think more strategically about leveraging relationships. As a connector and development professional, I naturally gravitate towards - for lack of a better word - 'collecting' people. I think conceptually about networks and have a strong baseline of social capital. However, Silicon Valley Next has deeply expanded both my own social capital and my understanding of social capital as a concept. I appreciated Curtis's emphasis on the why and how he emphasized that we should attempt to be a bridge. This helped me think more strategically and systematically about social capital. As a naturally strategic and quick-thinker, I sometimes rely too much on my ability to "wing-it" with ease. Silicon Valley Next helped to light a fire within myself to lean deeper into mutually beneficial strategy vs. relying on charisma and quick-thinking to forge strong paths and relationships. I know I have a strong path to leadership and an expanding network of social capital. I look forward to taking these lessons and learnings with me. They will help me in both my personal and professional life!

I need to put myself out there more. Rather than passively relying on a meeting to happen, I have to actively seek out mentors, colleagues, contributors, funders, and leaders in this field. I learned that leveraging my experience, both personal and professional, will allow me to confidently develop these external relationships.

It has helped me to prioritize the need for developing my external social capital. Often times this feels like something that only people with positional authority engage in; when in fact this is the opportunity to share authentic stories and plant seeds of change.

Silicon Valley Next has shown me that connections between people are valuable. It is valuable to our work in the nonprofit sphere and to our world that has becoming increasingly, disconnected. I understand that now and am committed to helping others see their connection with my personal calling. One way to do that is to tell my story.

I am someone who likes to "lone wolf" it... I like to do things myself so that I can be sure they are done right, but also so that I can feel like I am being productive. The problem with productivity is that it kind of just rewards the individual without actually benefitting the entire organization. Someone can be productive by writing out 100 copies of a document by hand (and I am sure they would feel accomplished at the end of it) but the more efficient move would have been to just use a copy machine. I feel like I will start using External Social Capital (ESC) to start being efficient where in the past I would have been productive. The challenge I face here is that I love to be creative, so I will have to be purposeful about when I want to create myself, and when I am willing to borrow something that somebody else has already created in the spirit of efficiency.

This is an area where I will need to continue to work on. The lessons learned from Silicon Valley Next will help me build a better roadmap for how I can develop my social capital in 2021. I now have a clear pathway and some realistic and obtainable goals for building my social capital

Please describe how participation in this Fellowship helped you navigate the challenges of 2020:

It allowed for a space to get out of the quotidian challenges and look at the collective issues we were having as an industry. This allowed for stronger connections but to identify tools and opportunities that were being considered or tested. This last aspect proved to be invaluable for own personal mental health and for my organization.

Coming together in this Fellowship became a source of strength and empowerment. I was able to rely on the coaching and encouragement of not only the Fellows but also the facilitators during this last year.

I honestly cannot imagine 2020 without Silicon Valley Next. It's truly been my rock during these difficult times and a breath of fresh air. It's been one of the main sources of positivity and hope in my life. Before Silicon Valley Next I kept my larger-than-life aspirations a

secret. I didn't want to seem immodest or big-headed when I felt in my heart of hearts that I was destined to lead an organization someday. Silicon Valley Next has helped me own my dreams and find a way to share them in an uplifting way. I now carry so much pride with me when I share that I want to be an Executive Director someday. I adore the cohort of change-makers who have become my close friends. Thank you Silicon Valley Next for helping me harness the power I didn't know I've always had! As I enter this next step in my journey as a national Major Gifts officer, I have the confidence in my abilities because of Silicon Valley Next. Thank you!

This fellowship and the Silicon Valley Next program was a primary and significant support. Honestly, I served as a stronger leader in my organization because of the support and guidance of Silicon Valley Next.

Obviously, COVID-19 was the biggest challenge of the year and this program acknowledged and addressed those challenges. Rather than pretending this was a small bump in the road, Silicon Valley Next helped us with how to manage our own anxiety and the anxiety of others. While putting this into practice has not led to consistent results, I have been encouraged through this program that no one gets it right the first time. I was encouraged to take chances, set boundaries, develop policies, and learn from mistakes.

Silicon Valley Next provided a safe space to connect with other non-profit leaders in our community. It allowed me a space to create new relationships. It also provided me with a sense of normalcy; in realizing that leaders across multiple agencies experience similar challenges. It also was an amazing source of support in navigating through all of the challenges that COVID-19 brought up in our agencies abilities to deliver direct services. This space was a saving grace in a challenging year.

Silicon Valley Next definitely demonstrated the importance of being there for my staff during this unprecedented time and really emphasized the significance of self care. This program helped me recognize the priority of wholistic wellness when experiencing a time like 2020.

I didn't really have any other professional supports in 2020, outside of Silicon Valley Next. Therefore, almost all of the growth I have experienced has to be attributed to moving into a new leadership role in my organization and then being afforded the time to reflect on this role at our Silicon Valley Next retreats. It was wonderful to have a cohort of caring individuals to listen and provide thoughtful feedback to my challenges and reflections, and in a year when systemic inequality was at the forefront of so much news and so much of our daily discourse, it was amazing to see how my cohort members - in their various nonprofit spaces - are pursuing equity in so many different dimensions. Finally, I appreciated the "powerful self" reflection... it was the source of a lot of strength as we navigated the changes and challenges of 2020.

I do have some great leaders in my organization that I can lean on for support as I navigated the challenges of 2020. But I am not sure if I would have been as successful at navigating some of the challenges and transitions of 2020 without this amazing cohort, Curtis, and Kris. Thank you for your gift of time and knowledge Curtis and Kris - I feel that I have grown so much professionally as well as personally because of Silicon Valley Next.

What aspects of the Race and Personal Calling session were most important to you?

Understanding the impact of or race is a key element in our personal calling and it drives many of our challenges and opportunities. Not including this element moving forward will be a huge missed opportunity.

I learned that the connection between the two is critical to my continued success as a leader in my organization and community.

Understanding implicit biases and the psychology behind them!

Being able to address that so many external factors of the world affect how we come into the workplace is important. We all have our biases and ways of dealing with or avoiding problems in the world and Silicon Valley Next allowed me to speak to this.

There should be as much recognition of race relations in this country and the work that we do as possible in the curriculum including a session on the intersection of race and personal calling. It was helpful to reflect on the dynamics of race in the work that we do in the nonprofit world and disadvantaged minorities are often at the center of the services that we offer. It was important to categorize the racial trauma from the past.

The self reflections are very important to fully understand the work we are learning.

That session was important to me because race is undeniably and inextricably tied up in all of the work we do to pursue a more equitable society, working against forces and history that have made our society intentionally inequitable. I appreciated the opportunity to talk openly about how race has played a factor in our individual journeys and sense or purpose, but also how we see race ingrained in our work and our visions for a better world.

How could the Race and Personal Calling session be improved in the future?

I don't see any improvements needed.

Talking about leadership pipelines and pathways for diverse leaders; unpacking 'professionalism'; envisioning diversity in Silicon Valley and better understanding the communities we seek to serve here in SJ.

I don't know.

More sharing out to the whole group because I believe that people in this work need to hear more and be exposed more to the racism that exists and that people are confronted with on a regular basis.

Missed the unperson sessions but understand COVID was to blame. In person the work is much more impactful.

I think it could have come earlier in the series of sessions, or better yet existed as a conversation that didn't feel so constrained to one session.

If you would like to elaborate on any of your responses about your Silicon Valley Next's impact on your leadership, please do so here:

I think I shared earlier but so much of my confidence and dedication to this non-profit field is because of Silicon Valley Next. Without this program, I really think I might have burnt to this year.

Working in nonprofit is tough. I question how much longer I intend to stay in the nonprofit realm but even if I leave, Silicon Valley Next did give me some tools to use if I ultimately decide to leave nonprofit services. My confidence over this last year has grown and I feel I am in a place where I can continue to use my authentic voice to continue to develop my skills as a leader.

Silicon Valley Next gave me the time and space to finally answer the question of whether or not to pursue becoming an Executive Director one day. It is a question that I have long avoided dealing with in myself and within my agency. I am so grateful that I had the space to process this; when the call came I was ready to step in.

I have always be committed to staying in the nonprofit sector. But I was not sure that I ever wanted to be an Executive Director. Silicon Valley Next has shown me why it is important for me to be an Executive Director someday soon.

I am committed to increasing the scope of my leadership in my organization but for now I have my sights set on leading our programming, maybe not extending all the way to executive directorship quite yet. This is a big change from where I started though, when I was actually thinking that it was a pretty sure thing I would be leaving BTSV soon to start as an independent college consultant.

"Clarity" in my purpose is so important and I feel that Silicon Valley Next has helped me accomplish this!

If you would like to elaborate on the value of each of the components, please do so here:

Both executive and peer coaching acted as a life saving device for me.

Executive Coaching was incredible! I loved the monthly sessions (I wish we could have been in-person) and would have liked to see our cohort even more than we were able to!

The peer coaching was a great way to further develop relationships in the cohort; to better understand the work of other participating agencies; and it helped to normalize the growing pains of stepping into leadership.

I love the coaching! just as important as the monthly sessions!

What were the main or unique strengths that Curtis brought to his role as a facilitator and coach?

His lived experience, focus and knowledge of the field are notable. He can relate to issues and provide incredible insights.

Curtis is a wealth of knowledge and has been a solid foundation for this entire experience. His compassion, strength, and leadership was very supportive and encouraging.

Vision, Wisdom, Social Capital, Authenticity

Curtis holds people accountable. He remembers what you say and ensures you have the resources you need to follow up

Curtis is an amazing coach. I have so greatly appreciated his wisdom, perspective, and coaching questions that he brought forward. I always felt safe talking about difficult subjects. I so appreciated the way he expressed such confidence in us all.

His framework is wonderful, and I cannot imagine anyone else explaining it with the grace and simplicity that he does.

Curtis's knowledge of the non profit sector and his approach to connecting with people was so good in learning from him how to properly do things.

Kindness, self-awareness, passion, fun, adaptability

Knowledge and genuine display of interest in wanting to give back and help us grow our leadership skills in nonprofit. Commitment to Silicon Valley Next and homegrown nonprofit talent.

What were the main or unique strengths that Kris brought to her role as a facilitator and coach?

She is welcoming, super smart, and she is able to help us all navigate difficult conversations. She is very inclusive and has a pulse for noting which voices are missing from the discussion.

Kris's ability to keep us on track, informed, and supported was invaluable.

Compassion, ability to help us see the strengths in all of us, warmth and openness

Please keep Kris involved. She has a very unique way of bringing out the best in someone and encouraging taking risks.

Kris did an excellent job of reading the temperature in the room; and making adjustments to the schedules as needed. I greatly appreciate the way in which she always showed up as her full and authentic self. I felt I could trust her immediately.

Kris added a different perspective that was appreciated.

The way Kris connects and brings out emotion into the work makes the work we do so much more passion driven and has helped me connect with so many emotions and feelings I was not aware where affecting my work in both positive and negative ways.

Focus on self-care, effective questioning, goal-oriented, fun, adaptability

Compassion and openness to diversity of people, opinions and thoughts. Dedication to the cohort and the vision of helping us grow our leadership skills to become the next non profit CEO.

As the leaders of Silicon Valley Next thinks about the facilitation of future cohorts, what additional strengths should they look for in potential co-facilitators?

Experience in the field (maybe complimented between facilitators), people of color or diversity in the pair of facilitators, male/female helps a lot, understand the field in this Valley.

I don't have anything to add here.

I think the emotional intelligence that Kris brought with her was so valuable in creating a space of vulnerability and belonging.

Leaders from different communities (disability, LGBTQ, veterans, formerly incarcerated) who can bring in their unique perspective.

They should look for a Black, Brown, or Indigenous co-facilitator, definitely.

Even more creativity!

Overall, what are the main strengths of the Fellowship?

<p><i>Great facilitators, and great participants. Innovation in approaching leadership, depth and creativity when covering material, grounded and rooted in relatable values.</i></p>
<p><i>The content, format, and organization of the entire curriculum was very impressive.</i></p>
<p><i>The biggest strength of the Fellowship was connecting us with one another. While I am grateful to Silicon Valley Next for helping me feel more confident (and leave the imposter syndrome behind me) in my abilities and direction in my path, I am ultimately most grateful for meeting the 11 other change-makers who are doing this work with me. Before Silicon Valley Next, I didn't feel very connected to SV non-profit life. As a development professional, I felt a bit competitive with other organizations to fight for resources. Silicon Valley Next helped me understand that we are ALL doing this work TOGETHER and that any of our successes are a success for all of us. It helped me to center our community in this work, and feel less alone when things get tough.</i></p>
<p><i>The length of time of this fellowship was the most important. It allows for fellows to use what they've learned in actual practice, to build upon prior lessons, and to actually get to know one another on a more personal level. Another strength is having people who are from different organizations, positions, and backgrounds was super helpful. I feel jealous of future cohorts who will actually be able to meet in person because had it not been for COVID, I think we would have all been able to learn lots more from each other, visit each others organizations, and developed an even stronger camaraderie.</i></p>
<p><i>I think the main strength of the Fellowship was the community that it created. I am so excited to see what this amazing group of leaders continues to do in the future. I was also so appreciative of the funds that came with participation. In the midst of a global pandemic; having funds available to set up a home office and not have the funding come from the agency was so critical.</i></p>
<p><i>My favorite thing is the framework of personal calling. I just needed that simplicity to understand how to be a leader with intention. I also love the executive and peer coaching to provide support as we do the work.</i></p>
<p><i>The connection to all the other fellows is so important to hear about the work they do and the approach they take to the work has been so helpful in the way I work now.</i></p>
<p><i>Community/Connection Focus on Agency/Empowerment Flexibility/Adaptability to Circumstances Modeling</i></p>

In what ways could the Fellowship improve?

<p><i>This was an odd year with the pandemic. if possible, the work should continue in person, consider a weekend retreat or something of that sort, at the end.</i></p>
<p><i>More human-to-human interaction (minus COVID) would've been so awesome!</i></p>
<p><i>I can't imagine what could have made Silicon Valley Next better! While we were unable to meet in person, I feel so incredibly connected to everyone based on the collective trauma that we are experiencing and our ability to grow together. I only wish we had more time together!</i></p>
<p><i>Nothing I can think of at the moment.</i></p>
<p><i>I think the BIPOC perspective could be better emphasized in the discussions at the monthly sessions. The material is fine, but the discussions lacked that aspect of authenticity and extra push to truly identify the challenges that people of color face in this work in Silicon Valley. The concept of being the only person of color or intersectionality of being a woman of color, etc. in the decision-making room really needed more space.</i></p>
<p><i>It was amazing, would have loved more in-person sessions and maybe even in person one on one coaching.</i></p>
<p><i>More incorporation of outside voices</i></p>