

**FW: Thoughts on LGBTQ+ training - will you look this over for me?**

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To: Holmes, Ellen [NEA] <eholmes@nea.org>

Hello Ellen

I have been thinking about the training last week, but wanted to be intentional with my words so it has taken me a few days to sit down and write this.

The program you all provided was a great space to challenge my own views, ideas and knowledge of the LGBTQ+ community. It even helped me find more of my place in it and I thank you all for that.

I spent some time each evening talking with other participants and what they were feeling and hoping for by the end of the week. The thing I continued to hear was more opportunities to think and work through practical applications of what we were learning. Don't get me wrong, with all the material and emotions behind them, table discussion was essential. It challenged some understandings and solidified others. This is not just the thoughts of others - these are mine too.

Another thing that I heard and would have liked myself was to take more time discussing intersectionality because it really informs our work when planning how to advocate for our members and create organizing plans that will help many more people feel included and personally invested. Of course - we could probably spend a whole day on that topic.

I am totally doing something I always discourage others from doing - sharing issues about something I had no part in planning or executing but offering no ideas or solution to improve upon them. However, I do not really have any at the moment. Except this... if you are ever able to get more funding, I would love to attend a follow-up training (like a 201) that dives deeper into using our knowledge to advocate, organize, etc. through activities where we make the plans, practice tough conversations, and model situations where we need to be advocates. Basically, what we did on the last day, but more than just planning an organizing campaign from a single scenario.

Hopefully this makes sense. Thank you for all the intense work and dedication you and your team put into these programs. I adore attending them and always walk out with many somethings to think about, apply to my work and build relationships with my other union siblings across the country.

In Solidarity,

Abbie Blumberg

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“Do one thing every day that scares you” – Eleanor Roosevelt

“Hope is a discipline” – Mariame Kaba