

Supported and Empowered

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Heal to Wholeness, Hercules, CA

2018 SENT Seminar Participant

*In September, the NBA Incubate Initiative welcomed its largest SENT Seminar cohort yet! The annual four-day training opportunity equips Disciples social entrepreneurs of faith for leadership and change as they nurture emerging health and social service ministries. This project, **Heal to Wholeness**, in Hercules, California, involves workshops, seminar series, and work groups to empower predominantly African-American congregations and communities to have hard conversations around socially conscious and justice realities of living in community.*



I have attended many seminars, for various reasons, along my journey. However, I have never encountered one that was so well-organized with the participants truly in mind. The SENT Seminar had everything thought of before we ever arrived; it was obvious throughout. Because they had taken steps ahead of our arrival, it gave us space to be fully present with what the seminar was offering. I was able to focus on my proposed project, evaluate it with others, after sessions with myself, and have a place to bring up any questions that may have arisen. Every part of the seminar gave me new things that I had not thought of before to consider. One of the biggest gifts that the seminar gave was the

option to shift my project's original idea, or to abandon it altogether. As we had the workshops and some ideas expanded as others fizzled, I was a little anxiety-ridden that although I had identified changes or deletions that needed to be made, I wouldn't have the space to make them. But the SENT team made it very clear that reaching this space was not only understandable, it was acceptable. This gave my project more space to breathe on its own and guide me into what is really possible moving forward. I came away feeling supported in my process of conceptualizing and birthing a project that could truly help others. Originally, I thought to carry out my project's mission alone, but the seminar showed me options of how to partner to

have a greater offering and make a larger impact. I left empowered; not just by the sessions themselves, but also with the connection to other leaders that were present. There was no fear that someone would attempt to take anyone else's idea and make it their own, but only willing openness and support to offer whatever resource one might know or have that could help another. This had not been my previous experiences with other entrepreneurial things, and it was beautiful! Everyone was truly invested in improving the lives of others, even if it meant they or their program might not be the one to reach the individual; they seemed willing to make a referral if that was what needed to be done. It was a complete, wholesome and rejuvenating experience! I look forward to my next steps. They're not the exact steps I thought would be (originally), but they are definitely steps in the right direction...forward. Thank you SENT Seminar for helping me see beyond where I was and thought I was going (my limited vision), to offering me new insight into where I am and can truly go...successfully.

Heal to Wholeness will convene workshops, seminar series, and work groups to give (self) permission to predominantly African-American congregations and communities to empower them to have hard conversations around aging, sexuality, sexual orientation, grief and loss, ableism/disabilities/special needs, suicide, mental illness, contraceptives, HIV/AIDS and STDs, homelessness, culture and genealogy, commonalities of faith traditions, and other socially conscious and justice realities of continual living and being in community, that foster unity and a heart for humanity.

*The NBA incubates new ministries, supporting social entrepreneurs of faith who are serving their communities in a variety of innovative ways and empowering these Disciples-led health and social service projects to focus on growth, impact, and sustainability. Learn more at **nbacares.org/incubate***