00:00-00:30
INTRO
Welcome to Partners for Advancing Health Equity, a podcast, bringing together people working on the forefront of addressing issues of health justice. Here we create a space for in depth conversations about what it will take to create the conditions that allow all people to live their healthiest life possible.
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00:31-01:20
Caryn Bell
Welcome to the second part of our healthy neighborhood study episode with Dina Abreu, Vedette Gavin, Robin Gibson and Patrice Williams. I'm your host, Caryn Bell. In our first episode, we discussed how this research project takes action within communities to improve quality of life for residents. Our guests shared with us their experiences as researchers, friends and community members as well as the operational outlines of this project.

We started discussing how they work to understand the influence of investors and their accountability on neighborhood development projects. This is the continuation of that conversation.

01:21-06:58
Caryn Bell

I think the things that you are describing, like you said are things that you don't learn in the classroom. They are learned through experience, but also through having like an orientation toward people toward community to respect. So I really appreciate us talking about that first as the most important thing. But I did want to ask a little bit about the what. About the healthy neighborhood study. while we were preparing for this, you all talked about naming the player, naming the game. And I know that's one of the core parts of what you all are doing. So if you, if anyone could explain that area and just sort of tell us what the healthy neighborhood study is doing even right now yet, or do you want me to do this one?

Patrice Williams
OK. All right. So naming the players, naming the game, this is something that community partners have been asking about for a long time like this. This was built up over years, right? Of the sense of wanting to understand who are the different players engaging in the real estate market in their neighborhoods? What are the different strategies that they're using to engage?

How can we learn from them if there are ways that they're benefiting, how can we benefit from them? And also what harms are they creating? One of the things that they really wanted to do is to be able to have the evidence and proof of what they already knew what was happening, to be able to call out people who are causing harm in their community to say that these lists of people, we need to do something to address it and hold our decision-makers accountable for what they're allowing to happen. And the harm that it's causing. And so this was a question, I don't know, was it a year or 18 months eventually to like solidified the question like to, to precisely say this is what we, what the question is, right? And that led to the development of the PAR analytic net, which is what I this is what Vedette brought me in to do is to help get that up and running that arm of H and S and so that part of HNS is very well, how can we partner with external researchers?

So these are not researchers that are part of the consortium, these are researchers who could be at public institutions, like of our agencies, these could be at academic institutions or nonprofits think tanks, whatever they have access to data that could help answer the questions that our data set that we've been collecting cannot answer.

These are talking about higher-level structural questions that we need to partner with other people who can be able to answer them. And what's really cool about this process was we had a subgroup, subgroup. So of the 45 resident researchers, we had different working groups that work on different parts or aspects of agency. So we have a working group.

And in this case, what happened is that anyone we solicited or asked the thought, OK, maybe they would have access to data that can answer this question that they had they, those researcher that research team had to put forth a proposal and submit it to the working group to review. And the working group had to say, do we even understand what this person is saying?

Do they adequately answer the questions that we have? Are they gonna be using the resources that we're going to give them in a way that we're like, yes, this makes sense. And if not, they had to try again, put it in more lay terms or show, provide additional information so they could understand what it is that this person is saying that they were going to be able to do with this data set to answer either a part or all of the questions.

And so we ended up with three different academic partners, three different research teams that were able to answer parts and aspects of that question. And if the community, if the working group on behalf of the consortium felt that yes, this makes sense and this is gonna do it. They each got $20,000 dollars to answer the question to then create whatever it is: a tool, a report, whatever it is in most cases, it was a tool. So that the consortium can then use this information for advocacy efforts in their community to start calling out the different players and understanding the different strategies that they may be using to engage. So just to give you an example, when we say strategy are people using what we call like blue grabbing or green grabbing. So that's purposely buying up property along the waterfront, right?

So that's an example of blue grabbing. So the additional amenity of being close to the water, being close to the water, we can now skyrocket. What we can sell that property for green grabbing could be like what we were talking about earlier, the city could be investing in cleaning up a park for creating new green space. And as a result, we're going now invest in this area to be able to sell at a premium for access to green space as just examples of different strategies that people use.

Another one that kept coming up is like by getting public land very cheap, to then be able to profit off of it. So they, so they had a very, very low overhead to then it's like pure profit by the time that they sell the land. So we were just trying to understand what were these different strategies. And if anyone else wants to add to this, it'll be great, but it was just, that was the basis for that particular project.

06:59-08:31
Robyn Gibson
Yeah, Patrice, I mean, Patrice really helped to lead this work and even like when we had our I think it was the community data analysis portion where we were able to give feedback on the tool that you just described. A lot of people, it resonated with because a lot of the changes that we want to see a lot of the housing and the development work we want to see it's not community based or through community criteria and the people who own a lot of properties and especially a lot of commercial properties, they don't live in the community. And so there's no accountability. And so what we as community members and what as some organizers who are resident researchers were discovering is that there are a lot of ownerships that were under venture capital companies. They are under different kinds of management companies. And there was no one accountable to really talk through how other residents really see their community, their street and that property. And so a part of that was just pure. We want knowledge and information so that we can hold people that are, that own things in our communities accountable for making sure that it can stay in our community that it's sustainable and that doesn't actually cause harm or continue to cause harm.

08:32-10:33
Dina Abreu

Just taking a peek. Of what we have been discussed, so often time we have like communities that have all this vacant lot and then we find investors comes in and they have discount, they like you find a lot of I'm not mention city right now, but you have cities that cities that, that just blow as the as we can go, they a vacant lot and actually build commercial place or, and have 20 years of tax exception, right?

And it's happening, it's happening in so many other communities. And then we hear people say so who should we hold accountable for that? And then we think about state, we think about, OK, our legislators, let's talk about them. But often time we have to go to our city council, city Council at large and then we advise people as we learn, as we go in this process that we are learning, we're doing research, we know exactly who to go to.

I, you can come up to me on the street and say, hey, this is happening in my neighborhood. This is happening on my next block. This is what you do and that's a fact because I know I have done that research and until we go to our lower low elected officials should say, city council, city council at large mayor and hold them accountable. We cannot ask state to change because most of the you might ask them to write a piece of legislation, but you need to do all your research on law.

And it's happening, for us that are involved, we can go and actually teach people, not be not really teach but give, give the resource and go do your own research. And you know that this is exactly what happening.

This is exactly what we should do.

10:33-12:49

Patrice Williams

Another aspect of it that I want to continue. What Dina was saying was once we got this information, right? And then we were sharing it back through the consortium to say like this is what we found that tool. So part of the healthy neighborhood study, like we talked about, it's not just research, it's also action, right? There's a huge action on it. And so part of one of the action projects or part of we call it link lab Vedette, do you, do you mind saying what Link Lab stands for again?

Since you came up with the word?

Vedette Gavin
Learning and innovation for community change. There we go.

Patrice Williams
Yes. Yeah. And so that was we took the information that we were learning from these academic partners, for example, about different affordable housing subsidies that were being used or not being used and who was benefiting? How was using the area, the AMI the area median index? No, that's not right. I think that's right. Thank you our immediate income to determine what's affordable is not accurate when you are bringing in wealthier neighborhoods in with lower, lower income neighborhoods. And then so the income levels are so much higher than the reality of the people who actually live in these neighborhoods is showing the difference between like what affordable rent would be if we actually use the income of the people who live there versus the area of immediate income. And then that led to the development of a criteria like a like that was part of link that action component.

Was that OK? Using this information, what can we do is then be able to give developers or community residents or whoever to say like do you meet these criteria that we think are important when you're making these type of decisions? Right? So it led to the development of another tool that we can then tell people like we learn this information. But then how can we start addressing it?

Here is something that you can use to help understand the context of what's going on in your neighborhood. But then also how can we change the way that people are engaging in this? And I don't know if Robin or Vedette want to take the next level because they were way more hands on than I was in that, you know, of how that came to be.

12:50-14:29
Robyn Gibson
Well, I can just start off and then Vedette you can sum it up because you're really good at that. But I was just going to say that with link lab, as Patrice stated, we are able to work in three different sessions with all the different resident researchers, but also people who we invited, who we want to be at the table, who are part of other kinds of community-based organizations.

And through that process, people decided that the next step for taking action is really thinking about what exactly they wanted to see in their communities and what kinds of developers they wanted to see working in their communities. And so a part of it was doing research which like our colleague, Channelle really worked hard on with like a whole team of resident researchers, but then really coming together to figure out to answer that question and to do it in a regional way, that's not just based in one community or one city, but is that actually have influences and touch points. And I think it was like maybe seven of the nine different groups or towns that we work with. So link lab is really influential with that. And as Patrice was stating that public report card and that criteria is something that we're continuing to work with.

We're continuing to see how HNS can work with other groups, other developers and get feedback on that and to amplify the work of our residents. And, Vedette I know you probably want to talk a little bit more about that.

14:30-16:32

Vedette Gavin
I'll just say so then what are we doing today? So that was a three-year kind of trajectory getting clear on the question, working with those data partners where Patrice came in to produce those tools, you know, Robin and Dina and the rest of the consortium, getting feedback on the tools to make sure the tools are producing, you know what it is that we want to see and then creating a practical vehicle to apply that knowledge to the PAR.

So we did all of that in a three-year arc. So what are we doing now? And Robin did this up so nicely, like we are trying to figure out, you know how this tool, which encapsulates all of our learning and knowledge can be adopted. What would it take to allow this tool to support the organizing power of communities to actually be able to now push back against this type of flipping development.

Renovations, all of these things zoning things that are going to start to price people out. So what does it take for the scorecard to be adopted? That's another research question. What would be the role and the power of community in getting it adopted? Who are the most well positioned in and capable actors to like utilize the scorecard and push back on a system, right?

Who are the people who need to be hearing about how projects score? So these are like a new set of questions that we have. I think one of the beautiful things about PAR, which often makes the learning hard for people who are not living through it to grasp is that you, you take a step, you learn something and it reveals the next thing you need to learn. So you design a step to then learn that.

So it's like you, you have to keep acting, taking what, you know, and acting wanted to understand what needs to be in place in order to make that knowledge turn to power. So that's what we're like working on now. And that's a whole new set of applied research questions that we're going to try to answer through pilot projects about getting these tools adopted for systems change.

16:33-18:21
Caryn Bell
I think, you know, we've heard a lot about this project, but one thing that I was wondering is how, do how do resident researchers come to this work? You know, we heard from Dina and Robyn, but you have mentioned specific people, specific resident researchers. So I wanted to know if you could share just maybe generally or even in specific how particular people who want to be involved, how they come, what's the process, what does that look like? And what's their experience? If you all have any understanding of that

Robyn Gibson
I would just briefly just want to talk about and restate with that said about how this really started as a consortium, and it's really about our partner, community-based organizations that we do work with. And so having them being kind of like the base partner is great because then we're always in the know of what's going on in our community or neighborhood, but also, you know, what's needed and who are some of those players that are doing this great work. And so being able to utilize that has been great for HNS. But also that is a part of why it began that way, why Vedette decided that instead of just having a board, we're going to work with all these different organizations because it was very intentional about what the table should look like here, how we should have shared leadership and also not reinventing the wheel, but really being collaborative. And so I know Dina probably has more to say, but I just want to emphasize that part.

18:22-20:58
Dina Abreu
Well, for me, I'll say again, I'm very active in my community. So I hear a lot, I hear people complain a lot. And I remember back I think was 2012 to 2012. Yes, I we worked together with one of it's not elder but older than me. And I connect with them. We actually went to the, our city Hall and asked, hey, we need a piece of land in our community to have a statue of our first state rep was Cian because I'm Cape Verde

I was born in Cape Verde. I'm here. I have two kids here. So I'm planning to stay here. So I need my kids and my grandkids to say, OK, my mom did not just stay in vain, she did something and to leave some kind of legacy, say, OK, my mom was not born here. She might have an accent, but yes, she did the work. So we, we reached out to, we reach out to the community, to our mayor and indeed, they give us, they give us a piece of land which today you can search.

It's Tom Lope, Tom Lope's Park and it was, it, it was a how you say it was connecting with people that you can say, OK, I wanna hear from these people later. I wanna hear this story. I wanna hear where they coming from, what they miss in their neighborhood. So by saying that is, when we come up with park and the is a report card. They say, who would you invite?

I'm inviting these people because we can hear from them. They have experience and we had Jackie and I think it was I forgot the name of the lady Margaret, Margaret. So they came in and they came with a full passion agenda to implement. Yes, we listen to them, we listen and then then yeah, and then they end up, they end up actually being very happy to get connected because even though they had a plan when they went there, but this is yes, we need to hear from you.

But how can we help? What can we implement? So it's like meets and by, by saying that is a the experience that I, that I have from my community makes me come on board as a, as a community researcher and see other people's need and bring those people on.

20:59-22:19
Robyn Gibson
I just wanted to add to that, like, as a research coordinator part of what I do is, you know, try to get other team members from Mattapan, other resident researchers. And so I've, before I've recruited

people just from the park just talking to people at the park, you know, and they're like, yeah, this seems really cool. I can be involved in my community.

I can do things that is connecting me to other communities. And I'm valued from my expertise, I'm being paid for that, which is very different from other studies. But it also shows that there, we don't have like a criteria for who does this. It's just about who is connecting and who wants to be involved. And I think that's very different. Sometimes there's this whole other kinds of criteria or you have to be in the know or know this person and, you know, it's great.

Like a lot of us do have like family, friends or neighbors, which is great who we bought into this work. But it's also just about being a space that anyone from any level of engagement can come in and really thrive and take action.

22:20-23:57

Patrice Williams
So I was just gonna add on to what Robin said, which is, I wanna, I'm thinking about the people who are listening to this and may wanna see like, how, how can they duplicate our efforts? Another thing I want to add is that not all of our grassroots frontline community-based organizations are doing the same thing. So like some may be focusing on climate and environmental justice.

Mattapan, for example, is Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition, right? So it's about healthy eating. We're talking about urban act we're talking OK, behaviors like exercise. We have a housing activist organization like Bay are out there and they're focusing on how can we make sure we're not displacing residents. We have a New Bedford. It's the YMCA, the South coast YMCA.

So they're not all the same, but they all have a common interest of trying to see what they can learn and bring back and create change in their community in Brockton. It's a community college. It's actually a student organization, right? It's a student organization that's, that's involved in this and it's, and it's also residents, but it started out as like a student organization through Massasoit community College. So that's the other thing I want to add is that don't think of it. It's like all these organizations have to be like, oh, they all have to be environmental justice or they all have to be housing where they're all completely different organizations. But there's the common goal again, that relationship building, right? And then through them because of their connections in the community, like Robin was saying, they recruit residents who may want to engage in this work.

23:58-25:30

Vedette Gavin
And I just going to say the practical thing. And they talked about like why these community based organizations and then community based organizations pick their team of resident researchers. The conversation that enabled that when I first started was OK, we're looking for people who are organizing and mobilizing. So like, let's look for those organizations and then have a conversation. We have this grant. What would make partnering on this grant useful to you? How would you want to structure your involvement? Which residents like some of them were like, oh, we have a Green Corps like we already have a core. We want to use them as our team. So our partnership should look like this. And these are the types of questions we're interested in answering.

These are the types of things we want to organize and mobilize around and then they were like, and then if you're going to what XYZ Neighborhood partnered with this organization because they're already organizing with us on this thing. So like this did not happen, stance happened. We went in and asked, we did not have a partnership agreement. We did not have a requirement for you need to collect this many surveys or do this many things. Like there was no real description for a resident researcher and no real description for a community partner. We co-designed those things with the

partners who said, yes, I'm already acting in this way. And yes, it would be valuable for me to drive a research agenda. OK. Then what should we do?

And that's how that happened and that's why they continue to refine the teams and recruit the people and whatever because they're not recruiting people into somebody else's study, they're recruiting people into their own study. So I just wanted to say that.

25:31-26:43
Dina Abreu
And, and I can just echo just by saying sometimes it's so easy to recruit a community researcher just by in surveying them. Because you, you engage into that conversation, you see the value of the data that the person is providing to you. And sometimes most of the times is like 30 minutes for the survey. You find people that wants to speak with you for one hour and then you're like, OK, this person have experience, this person have lived it.

So how, how can we talk? How can this person? And so most often time we have incentive but they don't do that survey. We find people definitely that do this survey because oh my God, yeah, the community need it. Oh I need my $20 for my bottle of milk for my daughter or for my kids. But some of the people do by passion by like this is a good data. I'm providing you a good data and you can create a policy out of this because this is fact.

And that's those who are sometimes we like to recruit listen, we have an opportunity for you to be a researcher. Would you like to get in? And then that's when VTS and the group come in and it, it's, it's that sometimes it's that passion is that easy with your community.

26:43-29:56

Patrice Williams
And each of the resident researchers are trained researchers, they are trained in the ethics. They can code qualitative data. They understand what operationalize a research question is. These are all things of just engaging for a long period of time. Like this is for me, I'm just really want to talk to the academics of just like they wouldn't understand, they can't do this.

Yes, they have been trained, they have been doing this, they know a certain things, they know how to look at a graph and, and be able to pull information away from it. They know how to, to make sure that the questions that we're asking, do we have the data to answer those type of questions even though we're asking them what, what, what variables or what questions from our survey do you think could help answer this question so that I can then run the analysis for them?

So it's, it's one of those things like they have a, they have been trained in human subjects. They had the skill set to be able to analyze data and make sense of it. This is something we do collaboratively. Yes. The academics are the ones under the hood doing the statistical modeling generating the graph, but they're the ones who are dictating how we should be operational that how should we be thinking about this?

I have to bring this up because this is so important. This was so mind-blowing for me as an academic but the ownership of change model construct that was designed by residents when they said there was nothing in academic literature that you have shown us that adequate, adequately described what we're experiencing. And they wanted a way to say that what is, how can we have ownership over the changes that are happening in their community?

And how do we measure that? And they developed a measurement right? To say, to capture people's feeling of ownership over what is going on in their community. When we, as researchers initially were trying to create to determine the measurement, we were using something similar to what you'll find in the literature like how we measure social capital or social cohesion.

But when we brought it back to the resident researchers that said this is how we generated, they're like, no, no, no, no, no, that's not the way to do this because this is a spectrum, this is not a one-dimensional thing. These are things happening simultaneously. You need to change the way that you're measuring that. And as a way of when we changed, we were actually able to see the relationships that they were telling us, you see that this is related to health people who have more ownership over what's happening in their community has better health outcomes than those who don't. But it's, it's one of those things if you going back to what we said, beginning, if you don't fundamentally believe that everyone at the table has value and what they're seeing is something to be taken critically and, and, and, and as important to the work, you would never get to that. We easily as academics could have been like, no, we know best.

This is how we do it in academia. This is how we've done in the past measured other form of measurements related to this, versus being like, no, they, they, they know what they're talking about. Like it wasn't even a question of like, should we do this? Should we not do this? OK, let's just change the way we're measuring it and then we're able to see the relationship that they were.

29:57-33:37
Caryn Bell
So Vedette during our meeting to prepare for this podcast, you talked about how people will respond to this work. And you, you stated something like they'll either say your project is so cool, but I can't understand what you're learning or they'll say what you learned is cool, but I don't know what to do with it at the population health level. Could you expand on that a bit and maybe give us an example of what you mean?

Vedette Gavin
Sure. I think the important thing about that reflection was people who say that are people who are not working on the ground or living in communities, people who are working on the ground are living in communities are like, yep. OK. I know exactly what to do that with that. And part of the reason for that is kind of in power. There's kind of two tenets, you know, people who are directly impacted are best positioned to understand and solve a problem and you better understand a problem by acting to solve it. And so what that means is that we are focused on asking the questions that help people residents in particular, those who are impacted, solve a problem, right? And so we know that the way a question is framed frames the range of answers that there could be to that question and who that answer is in services. So if we ask a question about from our part, a typical epidemiological lens, and we think about who and what is responsible, but we answer that question in a way where it doesn't enable residents to then do something about who and what is responsible, right? So the name of player named the game piece that Patrice described like this is a perfect example of that. Like we could have been like, oh, let's look at a systems level around how much more likely our vulnerable residents of these nine neighborhoods are to move or be displaced, right?

Which is what a lot of research does and they say, oh, well, lower-income people are no more likely to move the turn rate isn't higher there than it is there, right? And so like who and what is responsible is lower income, right? But we ask this question of like what are the systems of benefit and harm that are influencing development in each of those neighborhoods and who is benefiting from them? That's a different question. And so when we think about the application at the population health level, it requires partnership with community to act on that finding because the question was asked to enable people on the ground to take a next step in changing that system. The question was not asked to give the system a better understanding of the dynamics of the system.

You know what I mean? So when you, when you look at the learning, like we learn things about ownership of change. Well, why does it matter that people with a higher sense of ownership and a low sense of alienation have better health? Well, because people will say, oh, it's the amenities, health-promoting amenities in the neighborhood. And it's like, no, no, it's who's directly involved and has control over and benefits from those amenities that produce the equity outcome,

right? And so they're like, well, what do I do with that? Well, you can't just build something without the involvement, right? So then it's like, well, there's no place to put that, there is a place to put that change your structure. So that's the piece of asking, putting community in charge of even framing a problem, asking a question and making meaning of it, produces a result that is immediately meaningful and actionable to them and requires people to come alongside them in partnership in order to act on it. All right.

33:38-38:04
Caryn Bell
So our project here at Tulane Partners for Advancing Health Equity is a national collaborative that brings together different sectors such as academia philanthropy, the private sector, government and community organizations to advance health equity. That being said, how do you feel your work should be understood and applied to other sectors like these that might not be thinking about health equity like you do?

Patrice Williams
OK. I could take from the academic perspective. Couple of things, funders, we have a really hard time getting people to fund this part. Just, just this is just being really transparent. Part of it is it's expensive, right? It's very expensive to do this work and it's worth every penny, but it's very expensive because we compensate residents and our partners for every act that we ask them to do any type of engagement, they're compensated for it because we value expertise they're bringing to the table. That's not our only expenses, but that, that eats up a lot of it. And so the thing with funding that's so hard is it's either a situation where one we've had funders told us that they don't believe that we're doing all of these things at the same time. It's just too much. There's no way you're doing all of this simultaneously.

Right. And they don't understand that this is such a large structure. Right. And we had internal structures to be able to keep all these different things going on at the same time. So it's really hard for people to wrap their minds around it. Two, I've been told that we're so far ahead of what other people are doing that people just can't conceptualize it.

So it's hard for them to get behind it. It just seems too out there. It's just, it's so abstract in their minds. And then the other thing is like, well, do we really have to do all of that? Can we scale it back so that we can give you less money to be able to do this because we think this is cool. But we, we just can't, we just don't think you need all those parts.

And so it's just for funding is just really hard. So we've been very successful with Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. But outside of that, it's been very difficult to get other people on board to continue to do this work. That's one part that's really hard. And I really want them to understand that this is feasible. This is possible, we have the evidence to do it.

I almost want to tell people like, just trust us and I know they can't say that just trust us. But it's just, it's, it's one of those things we're, we're fighting against. The other part is academics understanding that we have a lot to learn coming into this work and be humble. Keep eagle at the door, be willing to again what Dina said, listen, just coming to a space where you're willing to just take in what is happening, right?

Not come in with an agenda, telling people what they need to do, telling people that they're wrong or come in with a humble spirit of just listening, seeing what you can learn and how can we work together. There are so many times I've had so much inner tension of like this is not the way I was trained and I have to work through that, right? Because I've been ingrained for years.

This is the way you engage. This is the golden standard for research. And even though fundamentally, I agree with this, I even have my own internal issues that I am glad I have someone like Vedette who

could check me, who can say, hey, I know this is your academic side coming out. This is not how we do things and I just have to be reminded, right?

And this is what we say, we hold each other accountable to be like because she knows like that's not me, but that's that side of me that I'm working through, right? To do this work. And so it's not easy, it's messy, but it's worth it. Like we said, we don't always get along, but you have to be able to work through those difficult situations. So I think the two things is academic partners not coming with an agenda to be in a place where we can co create.

And the other part, I would say funding, trying to get funders to see the value in this work and understand that it's worth the investment and even just be curious enough to even just to learn more so they could understand what they're funding, I think would be valuable as well.

38:05-40:19
Robyn Gibson
I was going to say that I think what Patrice said was amazing about academics and I think I see the same thing with other industries that you are, don't have a complete information, you don't have a complete data or knowledge set unless you're actually able to go through processes that are participatory action research. That's developers, that's planners, that's people are thinking about businesses in a community.

And so I see that PAR can translate everywhere, but it's about thinking about the models differently when you're thinking about who has expertise and also thinking about centering the people as people stated earlier, who would most be impacted or most benefit or the most harmed from whatever you're doing. And so I think that being able to use PAR and see that as an alternative to how we've done things in the past.

But as the way that being more the most sustainable in the work in terms of really playing in the forefront and investing and then getting investment back from the people in the community. And from my work as a consultant, working with Fortune 500 companies, working with agencies and organizations, it all comes back to getting by in from people being able to have an understanding of a build or an environment. And before only seeing other consultants or other like, you know, other kinds of big companies as having that knowledge and now being humbled to see that we're looking at things a different way and that really we're centering people and that you can't have full knowledge around that. So I see PAR is the future I see as the only way to grow in any kind of industry.
And I think that more and more people are seeing that the whole idea of an outsider coming in and give an understanding and giving research for community. It's not giving the complete picture.

40:20-43:22
Dina Abreu

Yes. I mean, I wouldn't say better than Robyn and, but is what they just said, I can just add by saying part is again why it seems like we've been repeating to say that my part of my six other language that I speak so I'm trying to speak one of them right now. Again, is the community. So by doing all these projects, so we have, we have community between this nine gateway city that we have done farms, feeding people, feeding your community.

They remember us, they remember that we, that we have been around for going nine years. Right? It's not something that we did for a year and then we took off and, and just promised and don't deliver to people. So people are already trusting us, community, already trusting us. Like, Patrice said she couldn't, she couldn't say that better than that academic.

Yes, we need, we need money, we need that. It's not cheap. It's very expensive, but we need it. We'll find it. And we have been a serve that for my community. I can say people used to when I used to the

door, knock on my sport time doing survey. People would like open the door like slightly like who are you? And what do you want from us? And now they invite me for coffee.

They, if I stay inside their house, like talking about other things and eating actually, because now we relate it. I look like them. They look like me. They know I'm from the community. I'm not going nowhere. We have done projects in our community by I said, farming said feeding, feeding the neighborhood. We have done projects beautify the neighborhood.

We have done this beautiful mural of one of those should not, I'm not saying ugly but was not presented. Well in my neighborhood. Right? We have done a we used to be like we call that bomb-shelter was a community where people used to gather by going to work fun political park. Everything just to sum what I'm saying. And people today is asking us, can we do something else with that? We, we have a book with that project right now. People are coming back and say, OK, I need to buy this book because my grandfather lived in that house in the basement where we call bomb-shelter back then. Now, what else? What we and they are willing to take, to take on and give us ideas and brainstorm. What, what else should we do have us have that the money, we'll do it because that's why we're here and I'm, I'm sure. And I know a lot of people trust us already. We will know like it's not by a chance that we are here for nine years and we'll keep going.

43:23-46:20
Caryn Bell
Thank you all. I just wanted to in closing, ask if there was like a word or a phrase that would summarize what you want our listeners to take away from either this conversation or from your work broadly. If there was one thing that you would want people to reflect on and take away. What would it be? Patrice, what do you think?

Patrice Williams
Stop saying that we're trying to empower community. They don't need us to empower them, they need us to listen.

Caryn Bell
Dina. And what else?

Dina Abreu
I go right after Patrice, everybody's empowered already. When you're born, you're already empowered. Now, you need a voice.

Caryn Bell
Robyn

Robyn Gibson
I think same thread. We already have what we need in our communities. We have the expertise, we have the people. And so just knowing that and being able to then subscribe even more resources.

Caryn Bell
Well, with that I want to say thank you all for, for just being here for this conversation. This discussion is really a demonstration of community and all of the values that you all have highlighted and really live out. So I really appreciate you all.

Patrice Williams
Thank you for having us. This was wonderful to be able to talk about this.

Robyn Gibson
Thank you so much, Karen. It's great.

Dina Abreu

I might say thank you so much also for the teams. I appreciate you and thank you for the interest on us. Thank you.

Caryn Bell

Awesome. OK. And of course, thanks to our listeners, we hope you found this engaging and we look forward to having you tune in for our next episode.

If you have any thoughts to add to the conversation, be show us the comments on our podcast episode page at spreaker.com or on our social media channels. Thanks for listening.

OUTRO

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