

Participants: Students, executives, an architect, a community garden organizer, and teachers made up the group of participants for this workshop

Artist Monica Kimrey:

Monica is very isolated as a solo artist. She has branched out to community design. Monica’s focus has been on Englewood and adaptive programming. Her true passion is in inclusion.

An article about Jean in Englewood was shared with participants. The article discusses how adults in the neighborhood can collaborate and begin to believe in each other, and imagine a new community into life.

Community Leader Jean Carter Hill:

Jean has helped facilitate two sessions between Shanti and Englewood. She has worked in Englewood schools for 25 years, she knew children could be better, and do better. The name of the organization she leads, “Imagine Englewood If...” is meant to make people dream of possibilities. The purpose is to bring community trainers to the area and teach Englewood members how to engage and become better trainers. Eventually the program began to realize the widespread lead problem within the community through their community garden.

Questions posed:

How did lead issue emerge?

When taking part in a garden project by the school, volunteers came upon lead. When moving on to another lot, more lead was found, and has continued to be found in lots around the community.

What the community learned was that the issue of lead was much greater than they knew. It was actually one of the largest lead cases in the nation.

A big problem that Englewood is facing is that no one is really aware of the lead issue. Today, the community and organizations are focusing their energy and work on methods to spread the word, and build awareness.

Programs sponsored by Shanti has developed a process with which they are looking to determine who their audience is, what community members may be proud of, and what they may be afraid of. There are all things that we should keep in mind, as they are all carry a great amount of tension.

The participants were split into groups, where they brainstormed ideas for the Englewood community:

Group 1

In this group participants came up with the idea of creating a mobile house which would be constructed with Englewood materials, on Englewood soil and would travel around different communities to “share the toxins” to raise awareness.

Group 2

In this group participants created an event where hundreds of children would be walking through a large public event. They would be wearing red masks and carrying bold that say “lead” on them. Through out the experience, the children are completely silent.

Group 3

In this group participants chose to mark land and spaces and then issue pamphlets with skull and crossbones in an attempt to brand an area as poisonous to help raise local awareness.

Discussion after Group presentations:

What are the benefits of the Shanti process?

The Shanti process helps create a powerful and very tangible way to address an otherwise overwhelming issue. Art initiates conversation and sets a level ground for all to participate and engage others.

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