**Lunch and Learn: Intro to CCAC’s Steering Committee**

**February 23, 2021**

**Transcript of Question and Answer Session**

**Application and more information online at <https://bit.ly/38ppnVV>**

EMMA: All right. So I'll open it up now to questions. The application period opens today, and will be sent out via the listserv and the deadline to apply is Wednesday, March 31. So definitely interested in people in all aspects of their access journey. So you don't need to be an expert to want to be a part. There's so much opportunity for learning. With that I'm going to stop sharing, and just see, are there any questions that people have that we haven't spoken to yet?

ZHEN: I have a question. Hi. My name is Zhen H———. I use she/her pronouns. I’m in Rogers Park currently. I'm wondering, and it might not be a thing, but I'm wondering if maybe you could tell us --us -- 'cause there's so many opportunities and there's so many different types of opportunity for work with CCAC. There's so many different committees or work ways to be involved with. But I'm wondering kind of what do you feel right now is where you could get a boost? So what kind of skills or interests would really help flesh out the committee, right? Like where do you feel like there's maybe a little bit of a hole, where somebody with a specific skill or understanding or interest might be really beneficial to the group?

BRITTANY: I'll chime in and just say project management skills are always an asset and all of

us are project managing in general, but project management is definitely one. There's just a lot of administrative tasks, whether you chose to do -- to support Access Calendar and just seeing all of the posts come in and then sifting through them and posting them with the team. Or looking at the equipment loan program and seeing those things come in, and being able to track them and follow them. It's just a lot of project management. I see a lot of nodding, so people are in agreement.

MATT: I would add to that, but definitely not a deal breaker, tech. A comfort with the Internet. Especially if there’s any kind of, you know, content management system, kind of spreadsheet-y, kind of automation need stuff. That would also be great. But again not a deal breaker.

 CHRISTENA: This is Christena, and thanks everyone to be here. It's really exciting to see interest and always exciting to talk about about CCAC and it's really cool to think about how far we've come. I think that's a great question, Zhen, about sort of holes that we have. Brittany wrote a nice comment I think in the chat as well, pointing out that there are a lot of great people on the Steering Committee as well and due to life and where they are and everything, they're deciding to step down. So there's a lot of torches to be passed on, so I think there's a lot of gaps of any kind to be filled. So we kind of are asking people as well during the application process to really identify what you think your strengths are or more importantly

what do you enjoy doing. And I always say, I feel like everyone who is a part of CCAC has heard me say this, is it giving you energy or taking away. So seeing what gives you energy

in this and select that and tell us and chances are there's a way we could harness that and we could use it for the organization. I often also say the Steering Committee, if we did have a staff, everyone is volunteer, no one is getting paid right now, but if we did have a staff, that would be the Steering Committee. So thinking about of all the organizations that have a development department, finance department, marketing, programming, all those things. We need all those areas filled, so it's staffing an organization with dedicated volunteers.

RISA: This is Risa. I'm just going to add one small thing. Based on the role that I really have taken on especially in the last couple of years, I always advocate for the more of the behind the scenes roles as well. You know, I feel like a lot of people, which is great and we need that, you know, like to be in the front of planning programs and all of those things, but Karen and I are

deep behind the scenes on the finance and admin side. And we all share a little of that and we need that to, but shoutout to my behind the scenes people.

KAREN: I'm Karen. I’m on CCAC too, and -- but I often like to just like be in a supporting role. Like here, where I was like, I'll come, and I'll answer any relevant questions. Or I'll help out with that or I'll moderate a tech side of things or whatever. So if that's you, there's a spot for you too.

HILLARY: I would say -- this is Hillary, something else that might be -- I would be really interested in pursuing growth is like the community engagement piece that’s sort of like creating more opportunities to bring different groups to the professional development programs, or engaging different groups that maybe aren’t from the cultural sphere to be presenters on. So just kind of building that connectivity with the city and really trying to represent different neighborhoods and areas of the city, and making some in-roads there to really -- because there's a lot of areas of the city where we haven't done programming and as we kind of get back into non-virtual and trying to find new spaces and really engage with new folks and build out where people can find the tools they need. Someone who is really wanting to get into the community and maybe already has some connections that we might not have, I think would be really, really critical as we grow.

CLARE: Yeah, I think Hillary also, that connects back to Emma's comment about social media, which is a really powerful way for us to do that which we want to enhance and do that in a more strategic way. Cause obviously it's a great place to share events that are happening, but how else can we use those platforms in a way that engages people that aren't just updates about events, but ideas and ways to expand the network. So I think that's a great point.

EMMA: It's a group of people who are dreaming very big, so I think if you want, I think it speaks to something that all of the committee members can name a different skill that we want to continue to build out. So I think there is always opportunity for what you bring to the table.

CHRISTENA: And I also think too, like after you've heard all of this, you’re like wow, that sounds fun but kind of intense, or if you have different feelings about it, there are different ways that you can engage and support CCAC. So coming to programs or using the equipment loan, or telling other people about CCAC. There’s a lot of different ways you can support us and

the Steering Committee is one way to do that. Also it's okay if after all this, you're like, wow, I don't know if it's for me. That's okay too. But definitely we appreciate you sharing with other friends or colleagues that you might think would be interested as well, 'cause that's how we found a lot of the people on the Steering Committee, is other people saying, you know who

would be perfect for this? This person. So we appreciate any referrals or any support you can give us.

HILLARY: Any other questions? Anybody have like a specific ask about some aspect or branch of what we do? Anybody have like a really interesting lunch they want to share with us that they’re having? Really we're here for you all, and via the email or whatever makes sense sense for you, but we're really happy we have a Zoom room full of folks here who are excited and want to know more. So yeah.

CLARE: I would just pose a question because I'm curious if anybody learned something today that they didn't know about CCAC? ‘Cause that's helpful for us to know also that we can kind of focus on certain things that maybe we need to be more clear about in our communication to the community. So I'd be interested to hear if there were any surprises or things you learned that you didn’t know we did.

ZHEN: I’ll chime in. This is Zhen again. And I didn't really think about the fact that you guys had social media. I kind of just rely on the emails and being part of the newsletter system. I feel like that's how I see everything, and that's how I feel like everyone else I talk to sees things. And so other platforms I didn’t really -- I am not a follower.

MATT: I can -- as an observer of CCAC's social media posts, you guys are doing a great job with the CCAC Facebook. I'm not a Twitter user, so I'm sure you're doing well on that, but I have no idea. But yeah, I am always seeing really neat links coming through that I'm glad to have seen.

ELLIE: I didn't know about the statewide activities, like ICAN. So that was new to me.

HILLARY: It's still pretty new to us. (Laughter.)

MATT: I do have a question, just kind of with the question of time commitment, et cetera, in mind. I'm curious whether any of the current volunteers are parents, and how any parents on the committee have managed juggling the volunteer and work and kids? I'm curious if anyone has experiences to share.

CLARE: That's such a great question. I'm really glad you asked that, and as I'm looking around, I don't know that we have representation today, correct me if I’m wrong, of parents that are on the committee. But that's something maybe we could try to get back to you on and see -- I think that’s a really great consideration for people that are juggling. I don't know if anybody would add anything that maybe is relevant or similar type of experience.

 MATT B: I don't have any children, but similarly, and I hope I don't embarrass you, Clare, but I got to know Clare outside, much like I have gotten to know you outside of CCAC, and she definitely seemed to be one of the people that should be a part of this. And one big question that Clare had was, it does sound intense. What is the time? 'Cause we all have lives. We all have full lives. The only thing I told her, which was yes, it can take a lot of your time. CCAC. But you give what you can. And everybody in this organization understands that we all have full lives. And kid or not. You know? Projects and everything and there's a -- again back to the family element of people kind of stepping up. If I say, man, I'm going to be on the road for who knows how long, they're like we understand. We have other people. Can you at least show us what needs to be done this week in your bucket? It works out, and Clare can say whether I was right about that or not. But there is -- the support there, everybody understands. It's volunteers. It's your time. So that's the only thing I can add really.

RISA: This is Risa. We did -- actually one person I think is a parent currently on the Steering Committee. A new parent, but a parent nonetheless, and then we have had Steering Committee members who have had children over the years. I mean like Matt said, it's a juggle and a balance always. A lot of us are pet parents, so, you know (laughter) -- but, you know, nonetheless, we all, just reinforcing what Matt said. All of of us have moments where life gets busy and for one reason or another, children or not, work or not, there's things that happen. We do ask a lot of Steering Committee members and we do have some concrete expectations, if you will, but having a line of communication with the co-chairs is so important, should something come up and should you not be able to meet an expectation, but clearly communicating that. And especially like if you want to talk more specifically, I'm sure all of us would be happy to do that. But I don't know, Hillary, if I zoned out when you did your intro, but Hillary and Clare are our new co-chairs. They're joining the team, alongside me, Christena, and Anna Cosner. There are five of us right now. There won't always be five of us, but really developing that relationship with co-chairs and then each others as Steering Committee members is really important, especially when life gets in the way. So I just wanted to add that.

MATT: And in terms of programming, you know, the professional development, generally do -- is there a pattern in terms of whether — daytime, 9 to 5, weekdays is generally where the professional development happens, or if it's evening or weekends or a mix?

HILLARY: That's a really good question, Matt. We typically do like the mid afternoon window, like a 2:00 or a 3:00 o'clock program during the workday. I mean, a lot of that has lived over from when things were in person. When it was sort of a natural transition to the end to your workday, you wouldn't have to go back to the office if you went to this professional development opportunity and you could go home. But that’s sort of been where those have lived. Typically weekdays, Tuesday through Thursday is usually the pocket of what we aim for programming. But it also depends as we grow and as we kind of develop in-person versus virtual, what is the caliber of speakers that we're getting, who are we engaging with, and are they East Coast or West Coast. So there have been some later ones too, especially in this past year, that have been balancing out some of those speakers who are in different areas. But it is something that we do try to keep in touch with our CCAC listserv folks and there are opportunities for us to kind of audit who's coming to these things and like who -- what's that timing that makes sense for the majority of folks to come and participate. And then we do try to record as much as possible too, any of the professional development programs that have a video file. We do try to make that available as an archive after the the fact. But yeah, so really that — mid to late afternoon weekdays are our typical plan.

CHRISTENA: And then the monthly Steering Committee meetings usually happen after traditional work hours, so right now they happen on like the first Thursday at 5:30, for instance.

HILLARY: And I did want to make -- I know a comment came up in the chat about kind of the subcommittees and kind of how those are curated. And I can include a few bullets when we do a follow-up with the call for applications, but really for most of that representation of the different types of subcommittees is really in this room. We have, everyone is responsible for kind of brainstorming our professional development program topics so that's really an en masse, all of us talking, some folks having very specific ideas that they present, and then each of those professional development programs is sort of a little -- a group of two to three typically Steering Committee members sort of spearheading those. And then there’s production. There's pre-production of events, so getting things on social media. Getting the registration set up online, sending those reminder emails. Making sure everybody has the Zoom link. That's sort of our pre-production team. There's a post production team. What's the follow-up email, are we doing a survey about this program, are we posting anything on our website in our archives? Are we moving forward to get things captioned for posting. So doing all of that. We have our Access Calendar team which Clare and Emma are both on. You know, so just checking that -- checking the submissions, making sure everything is being posted correctly. Following up if there's any discrepancies or any clarification needed with any activities that are being posted. And then there's, you know, more of that back end development, fund-raising, tracking, so more with Risa and Karen, working on sending out thank you notes, making sure that things are being -- what's the word I'm thinking of? You know everything is being accounted for with gifts and fund-raising, and am I missing — oh, yeah. Equipment loan. Equipment loan is a huge one which feels like a fairy tale right now in COVID world, but that's a huge undertaking and that's actually going through some bigger transitions now and the support for that, there's going to be areas for growth of support in managing how that equipment is being shared, what's the processes. We have new processes that are being created for that. So really those are the big pockets of subcommittee management that really -- and Matt, speaking of time management and man, that can sound like a lot, no one is on a team of one. The Steering Committee really does try to create like a lead and support, which is why that subcommittee level of communication and being able to check in separate than that monthly meeting can be super critical and helpful of like, I know this month is really busy for me, or I know I'm going to be gone and out of town, or I know that there's a lot on my plate. What can we do within this internal team to help support each other to realize these goals that we have on a month-to-month basis or quarter to quarter basis. So if that's at all helpful with the time.

EMMA: Well, it's almost 1:00, so I want to be respectful of your time. I know I'll speak for at least Hillary and myself, but I'm sure other committee members as well. If you have lingering questions after this meeting, please feel free to reach out to us. We would be happy to talk with you about anything that you want to know. In follow-up, we'll be sending out the applications, so please take a look at that and fill it out and come join us. It's a really good time. We’re really excited to be getting some new people in the mix. So thank you so much for taking the time today to come and meet with us, and I hope that we get to see your applications soon.